

Moving Passions:

Theories of affect in Renaissance love discourse and Shakespeare's Elizabethan Plays

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A minor dissertation submitted in *partial fulfilment* of the requirements for the award of the degree of Masters in English by *coursework & dissertation*

Faculty of the Humanities

University of Cape Town

2004

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GRADUATE SCHOOL IN HUMANITIES

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Abstract:

The 1998 film, *Shakespeare in Love*, sets Will Shakespeare (and itself) the challenge to “show the nature and truth of love... to make it [love] true” - with an ideal presentation of *Romeo and Juliet*. The film finally achieves this by ensuring that Will and Viola end on stage as Romeo and Juliet, playing the parts they respectively inspire. The film, and the play within the film, can achieve the satisfactory embodiment of true love only, it seems, through the replacement of stage lover/player with ‘real’ lovers.

The film attempts to unite love and art, but finds stage representation naturally adverse to its idea of true (authentic) love. Persuasion is similarly suppressed as inimical to the film’s notion of art as expressive (of authentic emotion). But, where love is conceived as spectacularly mobile, mimetic and transformative - as I show it was, in the early modern period - to effectively communicate and to affectively produce love are, of necessity, linked.

Joseph Roach has pointed persuasively to rhetoric’s strong connection with humoral theory. Using texts from Wilson, Wright and Bulwer, I pursue and extend his focus on the early modern passionate, rhetorical actor; the interface between body and mind; and the possibility of powerful rhetorical passions, generated in performance.

The film assumes (true) love as an emotion that is rare, elusive and, crucially, authentic. But as a renaissance ‘passion’, love would have very different qualities. Such passions would be vital, dynamic forces, directly communicable and contagious, commonly available and commonly shared. I argue that love, more properly “affect” or “passion”, was frequently valued in the Renaissance, not as a stable locus of inner truth and authenticity (the thinking that necessitates the

suppression of the actor in *Shakespeare in Love*), but for its very ability to 'move' where, in Rosemond Tuve's words, "the unity of the process *moving: persuading* is not disturbed."

I look for this movement in a number of Shakespeare's Elizabethan plays, particularly *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *Love's Labours Lost*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *As You Like It*, and *Twelfth Night* and examine the forms of passion in compelling topoi that attend love in the plays – Petrarchan tropes powerfully linked to early modern ideas of representation (especially dramatic) and the interaction, in imitation, between bodies and minds.

Early modern passions threaten clear distinctions between desires and emotions, body and mind and, importantly, self and other. I argue that, when passions are communicable and shared, the passionating actor participates in ideal forms beyond realistic imitation or personal, interior emotional experience - a process to which the real, ideal love of *Shakespeare in Love* is superfluous.

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INTRODUCTION: STAGE LOVE

"To show the nature and truth of love"... to "make it true"

Norman and Stoppard - *Shakespeare in Love*

Shakespeare in Love (1998) is structured around an ingenious doubling structure that marries form and content, material history and fantasy fiction, to ensure a double happy ending. The film is structured around a gamble, properly two gambles: Will Shakespeare's royal wager with Wessex, and the film's own gamble on its ability to (re)produce the greatness that Will is aiming for. This will involve staging an ideal *Romeo and Juliet*. And the film sets its terms for success in a rather contrived wager. The essence of love, its "very nature and truth", says Queen Elizabeth - and all agree - has not yet been seen on the stage.¹ Will must aspire "to show the nature and truth of love"... to "make it true." As it stands, the wager is somewhat ambiguous: the Queen's dissatisfaction with stage love may be a matter of presentation or of content. Is Will to show (love) truly or to show (true) love? The film wisely hedges its bets. Its audience knows from the start that Will Shakespeare will make good; in this lies much of the film's appeal, setting up the incongruously low expectations of its pictured past against a late 20th century cultural investment in the Bard – which it shrewdly pairs with our popular investment in romance. *Shakespeare in Love* shows Will to be lacking - not in skill at describing love, but in his experience of it. The film's end solution shows us Will had been missing all along: that the only way to show love truly (really) is to show true (real) love.

While Will is embodying his love affair in a script² we know will succeed far beyond his expectations, its performance is in crisis. This is unsurprising. The problems finally go beyond Sam the boy actor's straining Juliet, or 'Thomas Kent's' prior engagements. In fact, these setbacks are introduced, essentially, in order to achieve a perfected solution. True love, the film seems to say, cannot be represented or imitated: if it were, it wouldn't be *true love* anymore, just

¹ More specifically, no playwright has achieved it. "The Elizabethan custom of backing one player against another in the same role was well established." Joseph, B.L. *Elizabethan Acting*. (London: Oxford University Press, 1964[1951]) 94. Though the film will eventually require Will to come on stage as an actor, the right to try the wager belongs to the playwright.

² The film does not problematise the manuscript's status or its authorship. The papers he clutches are *Romeo and Juliet* and the film allows Will full authorship and, in the theatre - even a stage director's role.

a copy. We see an unconventional solution in performance. Unable intellectually to extract and translate love from others, or from his own experience³, Will (really *Shakespeare in Love*) is finally able to bring true love onstage in a pair of human vessels - lovers, who embody without representing. In a spectacular last-minute casting shift, Will and Viola ('real' lovers) take the respective leads for the first performance of *Romeo and Juliet*, replacing both Sam's Juliet and Viola's Romeo. Looking beyond the normative restoration of gender roles thus achieved, a striking feature here is the suppression of actors and, more generally, of acting.⁴ The film conspires to give us a performance that is not a performance: the public showing of Will and Viola (lovers). This showing is a presentation, not a representation. By bringing on a pair of true lovers ('real' lovers)⁵ (the "nature and truth" of) love may be shown - at least to the film audience - as nature and truth. But the value and meaning of theatre, Shakespeare's art, is then rendered problematic. And the film, not Shakespeare, casts and directs this (non)performance to win its wager.

True love, it seems, is peculiarly tied up with problems of representation. The film appears to be about representation, but it turns away from representation. *Shakespeare in Love* encourages faith in Shakespeare's play: love is successfully embodied, both in the playtext and performance. But the film has less faith in Shakespeare's actors. Actors ventriloquise. Speaking words not their own, their whole trade is artifice and dissimulation. Such falseness is seen to compromise love's purity: true love is never 'feigning'. If the nature and truth of love is to be that love is nature and truth (versus artifice and deception), to show love will involve not mimicking it - a mere feigning, a travesty of love - but bringing love onstage. Thus Will and Viola read the words of the play, but these are established as naturally, originally (in its strongest sense) *their words*.⁶ Their love affair is the 'true'/'real' context, allowing for true love on the stage. It is a true case of double luck. "They do not play for you; they play for me", declares the queen. But in the charged circumstances of their romance, they do not play at all.

³ More properly his own creative energy fuelled by casual sex with a string of tawdy muses: "Black Sue; Fat Phoebe; Rosalind, Burbage's seamstress; Aphrodite, who does it be'ind the *Dog and Trumpet*"

⁴ Mr Fennyman's passionate delivery, combined with filmic intensification, particularly in close up shots, even allows a moment where it seems possible that the desperate Will might have been handed a 'real' vial of poison, allowing for the possibility of a 'real' Romeo and Juliet tragedy.

⁴ Consider how newspapers and magazines delighted in the pairing of Hugh Grant and Julia Roberts, (both considered for *Shakespeare in Love*), in the romantic comedy *Notting Hill*; their pairing offered the promise of a 'real' offscreen romance.

The challenge can perhaps be rephrased: to represent ideal love, ideally. The specific bodies of actors are an inadequate substitute for Romeo or Juliet, for the ideal of love they represent - but Will and Viola's bodies are not. David Schalkwyk suggests that a degree of de-idealisation is inherent in theatrical embodiment, which reduces general principle to particular, ideal to instance.⁷ In the case of *Shakespeare in Love*, the very specificity of Will and Viola's bodies functions to make their performance ideal. The film neatly solves the problem of the stage's tendency to de-idealise (the problem that, in an actual performance, ideal is turned into instance) by reversing the relationship: Romeo and Juliet's archetypal love is, in the film, a pale shadow of the real, primary love of Will and Viola. *The most Excellent and Lamentable Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet* embodies (the story of) Will and Viola. As actors, they do not embody Romeo and Juliet; Romeo and Juliet embody the actors.

Shakespeare in Love seems to imagine true, passionate love as rare and difficult to generate. The film starts with Will in crisis because he can no longer write moving, passionate lovers. What Will does not know - and the film does - is that there is something, in Viola's words, "better than a play", and that he will soon encounter his true love: a *real* love. This will allow him to write something far better than the fine speeches of *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*.

As rare and difficult as it is to find, true love is near impossible to translate. As the film presents it, love is personal and unique to the lovers. Will and Viola move the audience because their (real, personal) love has been translated through the play by two tricks of embodiment. The film exhibits the two cases (primary and derivative) in which love may be considered 'true', and combines the two. Love is true when it is real; this is the case when Will and Viola come on stage to show Elizabethan London true love. If not, love must at least be *based* in real, personal experience, as it seems to be in Will's immortal playtext and those that will come after.

⁶ Though much is made of Viola, Will's stage appearance, once she joins him, provides the real coup d'état. His 'performance' allows a perfect merging of playwright/author and character, so that the words he speaks can be perfectly sincere.

⁷ Schalkwyk. *Speech and Performance in Shakespeare's Sonnets and Plays*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001) 170. Schalkwyk elaborates this idea in the context of a discussion of the hypercitationality of *Troilus and Cressida* for Shakespeare's audience. (see also Singer, Irving. *The Nature of Love*. Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1985. 213) Today, *Romeo and Juliet* has been cited and absorbed into general consciousness to a similar point of saturation. The story was a familiar one when Shakespeare told it. It is part of the film's fantasy of an original Romeo and Juliet that, while Will pillages from every source around him, he (and we) will not see so much as one a book.

For Will, love changes everything. *True* love is shown, in the film, to be inwardly defining: never an experience or a role that one can simply take off, such love stands at, and marks, the authentic centre of the self. Love is a private emotion and, like the theatre, “it’s a mystery”. Yet true love is also universal. Alongside the more self-consciously anachronistic incorporation of showbiz and psychoanalysis in the film’s sixteenth century London, (the emotion of) love, in particular, is presented as timeless and universal. In this way, the audience can be made to identify with Shakespeare ‘in love’ (a seemingly objective state), if not love in Shakespeare.⁸ Thus love – universal, but rare, elusive and private – can be a mark of authenticity, and the film may make Will an authority on love. Given all the above assumptions, it is clear why Will must be Romeo:

“... the passion which is in our brest, must be the fountaine and origen of al
externall actions; & as the internal affection is more vehement, so the external
perswasion wil be more potent...”⁹

This seems to be the lesson that Will Shakespeare has learnt at the end of the film, and the power behind his performance with Viola. But this extract, from Thomas Wright’s *Passions of the Mind in Generall* is advice offered to the rhetorician, and available to Shakespeare’s actors – practical advice, detailing how to generate the signs of passion and persuade people of passion.

As a Renaissance ‘passion’, love would have qualities quite different to those that Shakespeare in *Love* imagines. As I will show, to the Elizabethan actor, as to the general Elizabethan, passions would be neither rare, nor difficult to generate, nor profoundly personal. In the theatre as in life, passions were vital, dynamic forces; they were directly communicable and contagious, commonly available and commonly shared. I will argue that love, more properly “affect” or “passion”, was frequently valued in the Renaissance, not as a stable locus of inner truth and authenticity (the thinking that necessitates the suppression of the actor in *Shakespeare in Love*), but for its very ability to ‘move’. This was conceived in the theatre as a movement both on stage and between

⁸ Whatever ‘emotions’ early modern people might be imagined to have felt ‘objectively’ – a natural, but problematic way of thinking through the problem - the way they represented these feelings to each other (and themselves) was different, and these representations are significant. The corollary to the notion of timeless, universal emotional experience: the assumption that “quaint” or “conventional” Elizabethan expression simply occludes that experience, and certainly does not constitute it, is problematic. In one significant respect, the Elizabethans did not have ‘emotions’ – the word did not yet exist to describe feelings. They did have ‘affects’, perturbations, passions, and something(s) called ‘love’.

stage and audience. I will look for signs of this movement in some of Shakespeare's Elizabethan plays, in light of the film's attitudes to truth, ideal, emotion and representation.

While the film is peppered with Shakespearean references, only three plays are properly integrated with the narrative, and these constitute the larger teleological narrative. Shakespeare moves from the artificiality and typical comedy of *Two Gentlemen*, through the real, tragic passion of *Romeo and Juliet*, to achieve the transcendent emotional quality of *Twelfth Night*. To accomplish this seamless teleology, the film suppresses references to other Elizabethan plays that treat love. Conceived around the same time as, and even containing a parody of, the tragic love story of *Romeo and Juliet*¹⁰, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* offers an explicit and extended treatment of love. The comedy stands with *Romeo and Juliet* as one of Shakespeare's most well-known plays. But the film passes over *Romeo and Juliet*'s fey twin. Presumably this is because it does not talk about *true* love. It does. Another play from 1594-5¹¹, *Love's Labours Lost*, shows Shakespeare still producing a play with all the (perceived) weaknesses of *Two Gentlemen*, right up to the writing of *Romeo and Juliet*. Moving decisively away from the embodied experience for which the love tragedy is valued, *Love's Labours Lost* explores love at perhaps its most disembodied and intellectual. Allowing the ideas of love to play themselves out in an elaborate game, it offers key meditations on love as an idea, as well as an 'experience'. *As You Like It* similarly offers important ideas of love, particularly of truth in love and in art. This is also the case for *A Lover's Complaint*, which embodies the problem of seduction through (mis)representation. While I will focus my discussion around the plays through which *Shakespeare in Love* constructs its ideal narrative of love's growth, these other Elizabethan works provide a valuable counterpoint.

In her contribution to the 1981 Ohio Shakespeare Conference, Jane Donawerth effected a re-entry into old debates about Elizabethan acting and acting theory, suggesting that "in Shakespeare's time, [we] may trace three stages of theory [of acting]... the first emphasizes passion, the second, character, and the last grace."¹² Donawerth's teleology tells a quite different story from the

⁹ Wright, Thomas. *The Passions of the Minde in Generall: A Reprint based on the 1604 Edition* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press. 1982) 174

¹⁰ The mechanicals' disastrous, over-literal performance of *Pyramus and Thisbe* also makes for a nice point of contrast.

¹¹ I use the chronology suggested in the *Norton Shakespeare*.

¹² Donawerth, Jane L. 'Shakespeare and Acting Theory in the English Renaissance' in *Shakespeare and the Arts: a Collection of Essays from the Ohio Shakespeare Conference*, 1981 Wright State University, Dayton, Ohio. (Washington DC: University Press America, 1982) 166

film's, but the plays I discuss, bound by the film's scope, fall within the period that she identifies as emphasising passion, and as valuing affective representation as particularly effective.¹³ While Donawerth sees Shakespeare working within, and to an extent defining, the fluctuating assumptions and preferences of his time, the film sees him transcending them. I am concerned with the representation of romantic love on Shakespeare's stage as an early modern *passion*, particularly for the way this distances us from assumptions about 'emotion' and its representation. Joseph Roach provides a fuller, and more useful, account of actor's passions in the period,¹⁴ and it is his focus that I pursue, as it relates to rhetoric and the actor's body. Roach's reading is fascinating particularly for the central place it affords the passions, both in this historical continuum of acting theory and - in the Renaissance - between body and mind. I examine texts on the passions and the representing body from some Renaissance thinkers, particularly Wright, Wilson and Bulwer. Jacqueline T. Miller, reading Wright and Wilson (through Brian Vickers), has come to similar conclusions about the way passions may be imagined as impressed from without.¹⁵ Miller takes Shakespeare's Hamlet as her starting point,¹⁶ but looks outside performance, reading Philip Sidney and Mary Wroth to explore the idea that signs may precipitate their passions.

My discussion of the plays develops around compelling topoi that attend love in Shakespeare's plays. These range through the concepts of lover and beloved, feigning and truth, eloquence and ineloquence; contagion, disease and cure, the image of the beloved, betrayal of beloved and alienation of the self, love in the eyes and in the heart. These tropes are recognisably Petrarchan, but, for all its interest in the conventional language of love, this is not a dissertation about love poetry transposed onto the stage. These tropes, are powerfully linked to early modern ideas of representation (especially dramatic) and the interaction, in imitation, between body and mind and the bodies and minds of others. These ideas, common to the rhetorical early modern stage and to the role of rhetorical Renaissance lover, will form the immediate focus of my readings.

¹³ *Twelfth Night*, which the film anticipates in its ending, in Donawerth's scheme, marks a transition (from passionate rhetoric to something closer to psychological identification). This will be discussed later.

¹⁴ Roach, Joseph R. *The Player's Passion: Studies in the Science of Acting*. (Cranbury: Associated University Presses, 1985) 23-57

¹⁵ Miller, Jacqueline. T. 'The Passion Signified' in *Criticism* vol.43 no.4 Fall 2001. 407-21

¹⁶ Following Katherine Eisaman Maus in *Inwardness and Theatre in the English Renaissance*.

CHAPTER ONE: THE LOOK OF LOVE

"the look of love is in your eyes"

Burt Bacharach

FAIGN LOVE

Loving in truth, and fain in verse my love to show

- Philip Sidney. *Astrophil and Stella* 1.

Touchstone Truly, I would the gods had
made thee poetical.

Audrey I do not know what "poetical" is. Is it honest in
deed and word? Is it a true thing?

Touchstone No, truly; for the truest poetry is the most
feigning, and lovers are given to poetry; and what they
swear in poetry it may be said, as lovers, they do feign. (AYLI 3.3.12-7)

"Truly" Touchstone begins. In his exchange with Audrey, neither of the unconventional lovers speaks of truth in its familiar, modern sense. In response to Audrey's more prosaic interest in 'truth', Touchstone (unconcerned with Audrey's 'honesty') returns to aesthetic criteria. The most 'true' poetry is that which is the most 'true' to its *poetic* nature: that which is well proportioned, showing the greatest skill.

While *Shakespeare in Love's* wager is ambiguous, the Queen's dissatisfaction (which, combined with Viola's enthusiasm, prompts the challenge) is clearly stated, and delimits what will not do if Will is to outdo his contemporaries and put true love on the stage. "They [playwrights] make it pretty, they make it comic, or they make it lust. They cannot make it true." But Touchstone sees nothing in love that need prohibit poetical representation (or, indeed, comedy and lust).

Little interested in making a sensible match, Viola, as we hear from her own lips “will have poetry”. Viola has a gift for making every adolescent whim a prophecy. Ultimately, Viola will have the ‘poetry’ of real love, a romantic quality which transcends poetry. Will, presumably, gets the poetry too. Inspired by true love, this poetry cannot fall into mere superficial prettiness of which the film finds him originally guilty. Touchstone explicitly connects the truth of love with the truth of art. But in so doing, he debunks *Shakespeare in Love*’s suggestion that real/true love leads naturally (and exclusively) to better art. This last is a common notion, and one supported to a large extent by the film’s choice of *Romeo and Juliet*, in which the lovers’ poetic harmony seems to spring directly from their harmonious love relationship. But Touchstone suggests an equivalence, rather than a causal relationship, between true love and true art, in which love does not precede representation. The film identifies feigning love with the immature poetic speech of *Two Gentlemen* and tries to show such love surpassed and transcended with Will and Viola’s *Romeo and Juliet*. But, for Touchstone, the artificiality of art reflects the artificiality of love. Love does not perfect art; if anything, art perfects love. For Touchstone, certainly, *Shakespeare in Love*’s sleight of hand would be meaningless.

Touchstone’s pun on feigning is telling. As Sidney’s line suggests, lovers are typically given to poetry, fain to give beautiful expression to their love. Sidney’s “fain” may even suggest a level of obligation or compulsion.¹⁷ Love demands poetry; lovers’ eagerness to swear love in poetry leads predictably to feigning. In *Twelfth Night*, presented with Orsino’s suit through the person of Cesario, Olivia is quick to pick up on the cue with “poetical”.

Viola Alas, I took great pains to study it, and ’tis poetical.

Olivia It is the more like to be feigned, I pray you keep it in. (TN 1.5.172-3)

With Orsino’s ‘love’ embodied in poetry and then subsequently embodied in Viola’s performance, Olivia (and Viola) may assume familiarity with the fashionably urbane opinion on poet lovers. Poetry predictably exacerbates Orsino’s poetic gesture. In the Elizabethan period, lovers’ eloquence, in particular, was often represented, or suspected, as glib - lacking in content. This sees the development of a peculiar rhetorical lover’s argument which avers its truth in pointing to its innocent want of poetic artifice. The lover may stress ineloquence as a mark of sincerity, though for this he requires a degree of rhetorical flair. More commonly, the lover will

¹⁷ “fain” (adj) obliged forced, compelled” Crystal, David and Ben. *Shakespeare’s Words: A Glossary and Language Companion*. (London: Penguin, 2002) 165.

profess "Plain honest words" (LLL 5.2, 745).¹⁸ Biron will struggle to speak *in*, and not of, "russet yeas, and honest kersey noes": a habit of speech as fastidiously tailored as "Taffeta phrases, silken terms precise" (406), and as artfully coordinated.

Though they may swear prettily to each other (and us) of their simplicity, fictional lovers are hardly ever prosaic in their expression. We may see, on occasion, a relatively unadorned wooing, but this brings us no closer to a 'true' lover. Where an unadorned approach *is* seen, plain words in the service of love may in fact do more to expose the brutal workings of domination underpinning Petrarchan wooing than to show love's innocent self-sovereignty; witness Richard III's aggressive, and effective, wooing of the woman he has recently widowed.¹⁹ It is ironic, but unsurprising, that the claim to what we might anachronistically call 'authentic expression', taking the form of a refusal, or professed inability, to perform love, to play the (eloquent) lover, might automatically be suspected as a rhetorical tool for persuasion. King Harry, when he presents himself as untutored and ineloquent in love, speaking "plain soldier" (HenV 5.2.146), shows himself well versed in the forms of love.²⁰

What is omitted, or sacrificed, from Touchstone's observation on artful poetic lovers is the complementary opinion of lovers as necessarily incompetent poets, a problem that - where Orlando's appalling verses must be hung about the trees - is everywhere evident. Lovers' earnestness is frequently shown in their botched attempts at courtly eloquence.²¹ Against the assumptions of *Shakespeare in Love*, this is never more so than when lovers speak directly. Orlando's words and actions before Rosalind are, not unexpectedly, as dismally unsatisfying on stage as they are on paper. If his presence is not carefully staged, Rosalind's confidence in him may constitute her least persuasive moment. Ganymede, the brave rhetorician, makes Orlando a weak love object beside him/her on the stage. Shakespeare gives a more sensitive reading of Orlando's lover's woodenness in Sonnet 23 in which the lover is an actor who describes himself:

¹⁸ In this, Biron unwittingly apes Anthony who, in his most spectacular demonstration of rhetoric, declares himself not an orator, but "a plain blunt man". (JC 3.2, 209)

¹⁹ see esp Oestreich-Hart, Donna. "Therefore, since I cannot prove a lover" in *Studies in English Literature 1500/1900*, vol40, no7. Spring 2000. pp.241-60

²⁰ His elaborate game with Catherine is full of these references to his soldier's plainness: see 99-100, 124, 140-3, 149, 149-51, 160, 202, 210-3.

²¹ Lysander is accused of having sung "With feigning voice verses of feigning love" (MND1.1.311) This marks off his performance as a successful display of courtliness, but may get more laughs if Egeus describes Lysander's courting voice straining its 'natural' range - Orsino will employ Cesario for this purpose. Lysander's effort then takes the seriousness off Egeus' charge, and credits him with an engaging comic seriousness.

“O’er-charged with burden of my own love’s might”. The idea that intense passion can hinder, rather than empower, the lover in performance will be an important one.

On the stage, Rosalind can (and must) compensate for Orlando, wooing the audience for both of them. A pair of true Renaissance lovers who are clearly irresistible to each other but whose appeal remains inaccessible, whose attractiveness convince and seduce each other exclusively, show seemingly reserve and modesty, but have somewhat limited use to the playwright, and are fair game for comedy. *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* gives us Demetrius, Hermia, Lysander and (slightly more engaging) Helena. Here we see stage lovers, a serviceable stock stage property, but not ‘love’ – at least not as the pure, disembodied entity required by *Shakespeare in Love*. *Romeo and Juliet* holds out the promise of more developed tragic characters, who inspire a greater investment. Romeo and (or) Juliet must perform. This is, of course, a truism on the stage – and (somewhat modified) in film. But *Shakespeare in Love* uses the filmic medium to present a fantasy in which the lovers need not (and should not) perform their love, either on stage or off. Will and Viola must simply step on stage in their proper persons and stage love will be true love.

THE LOOK OF LOVE

Shakespeare in love suppresses the presence of stage actors, because it finds acting love to be problematic. Will and Viola are able to avoid performing – at least in their stage scenes with each other – by the narrative trick of reverse embodiment and, further, by tricks of the camera. Two audiences observe *Romeo and Juliet*’s stage debut: the Elizabethan stage audience and the film’s modern audience. Unlike the theatre audience, the film audience (the one that counts) knows that Will and Viola are real lovers – indeed that, in some sense, they *are* Romeo and Juliet. The film’s great trick, and one not available to the stage, is to (publicly) show (private) love.

The film plays on the stage/backstage divide that separates the love stories of Romeo and Juliet and Will and Viola, intensifying our delight in the privacy of Will and Viola’s rehearsals against the formal rehearsals, so that we see the two love stories (of actors and their parts) developing organically alongside each other. Appropriately, at the film’s emotional high point, the camera effects a final blurring of those boundaries. The once-lovers, meeting now as actors playing Romeo and Juliet, encounter each other alone, backstage. They rush forward... As the camera

zooms out from Viola and Will's embrace, we become gradually aware of the sly elliptical edit that positions them (and us) again on the stage; the circling camera extends its shallow focus to gradually reveal the hushed audience, a blur of faces, slowly coming into focus.

When they speak again, their voices remain hushed and intimate and, as *Romeo and Juliet*, Will and Viola have eyes only for each other. While the film offers its viewers privileged views of the action impossible in any theatre, it suggests that Will and Viola's insular, absorbed gaze is extremely effective in Elizabethan performance, as well as appropriate to the material.²² But (of course) the film's solution is not really viable on Shakespeare's stage. The camera performs for Will and Viola - where they can, or will, not. Will and Viola's love, the film suggests, must not be performed: to do this would be inimical to the nature of their love. But it can, presumably, be shown.

1. Finding Love

Shakespeare in Love chooses love as a way of seeming to open up a 'real' emotionally authentic Shakespeare to a popular, modern audience. Popularised as universal, love is at the same time commonly recognised as that most private and authentic of emotions. Will's profound inward passion must be distinguished from the outer shows of those that merely play lovers.

A number of literary critics and social historians have commented on the development of a sense of authentic self and the (related) value of "inwardness" in the early modern period. Recent emphasis on 'the body' has led critics to imagine early modern inwardness as precursor to - but distinct from - modern ideas of inwardness and subjectivity. While the articulation of an early modern inner space or identity distinct from outward show is significant, the distinction between bodily feelings and emotion would seem to come less naturally.²³ In her discussion of the Renaissance 'inward language', Anne Ferry stresses the spatial nature of 'inward' and 'outward', and cautions against the tendency to read inward as pointing to a space beyond the physical.

²² It might be argued that the tragic aspect of *Romeo and Juliet* is required not only for its solemn intensity, but also for its privacy, against the bustling activity of the comic stage.

²³ Love has perhaps always been a special case, complicating the separation and identity of body and emotion/mind. In her book *Desire: Love Stories in Western Culture*, Catherine Belsey points to "the difficulty of fixing... a state of mind which is also a state of body, and which perhaps deconstructs the opposition between the two..." (Oxford: Blackwell. 1994) 3

Thus “inward parts” (inward counterpart, not to the outer casing of the body, but to its extremities) are shown to refer to the bodily organs²⁴: invisible and inaccessible, but undeniably present.²⁵ Ferry’s careful reading suggests the possibility of locating early modern emotions (as humoral ‘passions’) in/on the body, rather than assuming they were conceived as existing ‘beyond’ it. In another important treatment of ‘inwardness’, Katherine Maus notes the body’s role in constructing and conceiving of inwardness (“... the whole interior of the body... quite often involves itself in the production of the mental interior”)²⁶ though she stresses that the presence of the bodily interior does not make the body wholly present to knowledge and observation.²⁷

Michael Schoenfeldt’s work on the Renaissance body is of particular relevance. Where what we call ‘emotions’ were understood, in the framework of Galenic thought, as (humoral) passions, passions that may be understood (and defined) through the body. This allowed for the anatomising of passionate feeling²⁸; passions might be imagined physically, as things that can act on the body - and be acted on.

An understanding of inwardness as bodily, the notion that a person’s inward secrets²⁹ lay not metaphysically beyond, but – quite physically – *inside* the body, will have profound implications for the concept of the early modern body. To the early modern mind, truth is always inside. Even with Maus’ proviso, once one has access to the body in its outward signs, psychological truth *is there*, in some sense, to be interpreted.³⁰ If, as David Hillman has recently argued, extending this notion of the interior, truth was understood to be contained in the body, the entrails, the heart etc,³¹ this would have implications for the early modern understanding of the *outside* of the body: what, and how, it presents. Such insights into the body and inwardness might then partially explain the early modern body’s complex legibility and the pervading

²⁴ See also Bamforth, J.B. *The Little World of Man*. (London: Longmans, Green and Co, 1952) 53

²⁵ Ferry, Anne. *The “Inward” Language: Sonnets of Wyatt, Sidney, Shakespeare, Donne*. (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1983) 161-2

²⁶ Maus, Katherine Eisaman. *Inwardness and Theatre in the English Renaissance*. (London: University of Chicago Press, 1995) 195 On the “corporeality of inwardness” see also Maus ‘Proof and Consequence: Inwardness and its exposure in the English Renaissance’ in *Materialist Shakespeare: A History*, edited by Ivo Kamps. (London: Verso, 1995) 166

²⁷ Maus, *Inwardness*. 195

²⁸ Schoenfeldt, Michael C. *Bodies and Selves in Early Modern England: Physiology and Inwardness in Spenser, Shakespeare, Herbert and Milton*. (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1999) esp. 6

²⁹ “the commonest term in 16th century English for the contents of the heart” (Ferry, *Inward Language*. 8)

³⁰ an excellent example is the man who may be “inward searched” to show a white liver. (Mer3.2.86)

fascination with dissimulation, ascribed to the period.³² Where passions were understood as physical perturbations, the physical signs of the body were particularly significant.

Renaissance theory might well accept that *Shakespeare in Love*'s Will and Viola bring love on the stage *in* their persons. But, further, it would suggest that their bodies would show physical proof of love, in conventional physical signs - supposedly the physical outflow of the body's interior, where truth is inside and leaves its tokens on the body's exterior. The film rejects these proofs, shared by lover and actor alike, as mere conventional signs. Will and Viola must be distinguished as lovers by something better and more 'natural'. The emphasis on a 'natural' or realistic aesthetic goes further than Viola's complaint (which the film fulfils as prophecy) that "stage love will never be true love while the law of the land has our heroines played by pipsqueak boys in petticoats!" The lovers need not act, where they can simply present their authentic bodies, assuming a universal physical language. The transparency of their bodies, in reality an effect of the camera, is the direct consequence of an authenticity that rejects conventional signs.

2. Love marked

Valentine Why, how know you that I am in love?
Speed Marry, by these special marks: first, you have
 learned, like Sir Proteus, to wreath your arms, like a
 malcontent; to relish a love-song, like a robin redbreast;
 to walk alone, like one that had the pestilence; to sigh,
 like a schoolboy that had lost his ABC; to weep, like a
 young wench that had buried her grandam; to fast,
 like one that takes diet; to watch, like one that fears
 robbing; to speak puling, like a beggar at Hallowmas.(TGV2.1.16-24)³³

³¹ Hillman, David. 'Visceral Knowledge' in *The Body in Parts*, edited by. David Hillman and Carla Mazzio (London: Routledge, 1997) 81-106

³² "When we peer deeply into the intellectual and moral life of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Europe, we must be struck by how intensely aware its writers and thinkers were of the phenomenon of dissimulation. They showed a far stronger interest in it than did preceding generations and seemed at times to feel its presence as a pervasive or even overwhelming reality..." (Zagorin, Perez. *Ways of Lying: dissimulation, persecution and conformity in early modern Europe*. (Cambridge Mass: Harvard, 1990) 255

³³ Kathleen Mckluskie reads this incongruous list of lover's attributes as making the simultaneous presence of all these marks inconceivable, showing that the lover is "part of a system of representation

Speed easily recognises the signs of love on a master, and claims to derive this knowledge observing what is, practically, the embodiment of the litany of lovers' marks. What follows Speed's comment on Valentine's passionate longing involves a pun on absence and presence, within and without, where the absence of the evidencing body is held against the lack of access to the body's interior, the interior discussed above, in which truth is supposed to reside.

Valentine Are all these things perceived in me?

Speed They are all perceived without ye.

Valentine Without me? They cannot.

Speed Without you? Nay, that's certain, for without you
 were so simple, none else would. But you are so without
 these follies that these follies are within you, and shine
 through you like the water in an urinal, that not an
 eye that sees you but is a physician to comment on
 your malady. (TGV2.1.31-39)

In (unusually) fine form, Speed presents a grotesque parody of that Petrarchan aesthetic of brilliant transparency that underpins the charmed Lysander's first impassioned address to "[t]ransparent Helena" (2.2.110) in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. The servant's observation is embedded in a reading of his master's signs that appropriates the physician's discourse, while emphasising these signs as common – and commonly observable. The culmination of his spiralling logic is outlandish. Speed offers a bizarre inversion of the physician's diagnosis of outward signs to reveal inward mysteries and also of the commonplace (as in Helena's case) that the lover's true heart makes his bodily matter transparent. The conversation accordingly turns to glance at the problem of the beloved in the lover's looks, where the lover bears the image of the beloved in his heart, even so that its perfection shines through the body.

Speed might well then claim to know Silvia (in Valentine's looks) without having seen her. Yet this does not fully explain Speed's claim: "But you are so without / these follies that these follies are within you" (2.2.35-6), and Valentine finally drops the subject in exasperation, without

rather than the result of a conventional attribute". *Renaissance Dramatists*. (Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1987) 119

casting any light on Speed's meaning. Speed seems to hint at the idea that playing the lover may make a lover: not only does inward love make its mark on the body, but outward gesture and habit may become inner truth. Classical antecedents to this thinking included Seneca's story of Vibius, who played the madman even to madness, and Pliny's rather delightful anecdote of the actor who feigned the symptoms of gout so feelingly that he contracted the disease; the actor Mondory's passionate collapse provided a more contemporary example.³⁴ Feigned symptoms of fictitious suffering might give way to the real thing; was this the case for the humoral lover? In the case of (imitative) love, we are dealing with something more than Roach's argument about the humoral vulnerability of the actor.³⁵ When Quintilian turned, in the *Institutes of Oratory*, to actors, his first (and last) word was one of caution, admonishing the orator to avoid the actor's example. Love, like the feelings of avarice and fear, is to be excluded from the orator's inventory of emotional imitations, as one of the "acquirements which are not at all necessary to the orator, and which corrupt the mind... for frequent imitation settles into habit."³⁶ The example of love would have immediately, and aptly, suggested the dangers for a Renaissance audience, made an example not only for its undesirable qualities, but also for the force of its imitation, where imitation (with the mind or body) shapes both habit and physical form.

A scene from *Love's Labours Lost* provides a neat counterpoint to Speed's cunning exchange with his courtly master. Again we see the lover-poet baited, as his servant jokes about the question of his love. But here the master would have his signs read as symptoms of love, and Moth teases Don Armado by obstinately refusing to read love in the obvious posture he presents for scrutiny.

Armado Boy, what sign is it when a man of great spirit
 grows melancholy?

Mote A great sign, sir, that he will look sad. (LLL1.21-3)

Hibbard glosses this exchange with a pertinent quotation from the *Ars Amatoria* (1661 translation): "By looking melancholy you will prove / Successful; all will say, 'This man's in

³⁴ Roach, *Player's Passion*. 49. Wright also enumerates examples to treat the question: how may "a man's conceit work changes in his body" *Passions of the Minde*. 65-6

³⁵ Roach, *Player's Passion*.

³⁶ In Cole, Toby and Helen Krich Chinoy (eds) *Actors on Acting: The Theories, Techniques, and Practices of the World's Great Actors Told in Their Own Words*. (New York: Crown Publishers, 1970) 26

love’.”³⁷ Armado is peculiarly unsuccessful in pointing, rhetorically, to his affected melancholy. The melancholy sickness and love sickness are invariably equated. Thus Armado still thinks to save his point by asking “[h]ow canst thou part sadness and melancholy” (1.1.7), a proposition for which we never receive the confidently promised proof, let alone return to the question of (the signs of) melancholy as a sure indication of love. Little wonder that Moth takes over from Armado’s incompetent Socratic posture, to make the Don his pupil in love (3.1.32). Here, the Don is quoted neither in love, nor melancholic, nor great, and can only enviously emulate the noblemen’s affect.

His face’s own margin did quote such amazes
That all eyes saw his eyes enchanted with gazes. (LLL 2.1.246-7)

In the very next scene, Boyet reads the dumb rhetoric of the King’s eyes to discover that Navarre is lovestruck – and is proven correct in the assessment that he presents to the princess after their first meeting:

Boyet If my observation, which very seldom lies,
By the heart’s still rhetoric disclosed with eyes,
Deceive me not now, Navarre is infected.
Princess With what?
Boyet With that which we lovers entitle “affected”. (2.1.228-32)

Love is marked in Navarre. But by the end of the play, when Biron presents their plight in what is almost a mirror image of these lines,³⁸ the princess and her ladies have still shrewdly declined to take the men (seriously) on signs so interpretive in nature. Confronted finally with (what purport to be) earnest declarations, the princess declares that she and her ladies took the noblemen’s letters (and “favours”) and understood them as “bombast and as lining to the time” and responded “in their own fashion, like a merriment.” (5.2.763-6) Yet the gentlemen expect the ladies to have read more than “what silent love hath writ” (Sonnet 23) in letters, and symbolized in tokens.

³⁷ Hibbard in Shakespeare, William. *Love’s Labours Lost* (Oxford Shakespeare/ World’s Classics) Ed. G.R. Hibbard (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1990) 110

³⁸ Biron: Write “Lord have mercy on us” on those three.
They are infected, in their hearts it lies.
They have the plague, and caught it of your eyes. (LLL5.2.419-421)

The eyes, pervasive in the play when love is first diagnosed, are almost forgotten in its accelerated conclusion. Here the briefest of interjections from Longueville shows what, more than words and tokens, was presented to the ladies:

Dumaine Our letters, madam, showed much more than jest.
Longueville So did our looks.
Rosaline We did not quote them so. (LLL773-5)

So did our looks. The Princess has exculpated herself from responsibility by refusing to accord personal significance to the letters and tokens.³⁹ But Longueville points (away from the lords' letters and tokens) to their authentic(ating) bodies. The beginning of the play is suffused with references to the lover's eyes; when Boyet divines Navarre's infection and interprets his "still eloquence", he perceives it in the King's eye, and persistently links his inability to speak with his eagerness to look.⁴⁰

Boyet Why, all his behaviours did make their retire
 To the court of his eye, peeping thorough desire.
...
 All senses to that sense did make their repair,
 To feel only looking on fairest of fair.
 Methought all his senses were locked in his eye... (2.1.234-4; 239-42)

This look demands the Princess' look, but it is Boyet who notes Navarre's despair. Finally, the princess's even answer prescribes the same response to the sincerity/authenticity of letters and of looks. "more than jest... We did not quote them so" (5.2.773, 775)

³⁹ These looks too are mere token words and the Princess will have nothing to do with love:
 Formed by the eye and therefore like the eye,
 Full of strange shapes, of habits and of forms,
 Varying in subjects as the eye doth roll
 To every varied object in his glance; (LLL5.2)

⁴⁰ In a passage all about dumb eloquence and noting, Shakespeare's strange description of Navarre comically embodies the Renaissance debate noted by Ferry, which sought to determine, between the eyes and the heart, the vehicle by which the secrets of the heart are most clearly known. (*Inward Language*, 58)

Navarre and his men, admittedly, devalue their looks by their failure to look, falling for the token trick and each one wooing the wrong woman; but even in their disembodied, highly affected wooing, they suggest the common lover's problem of showing, or evidencing love, even (and perhaps especially) authentic love. In *As You Like It*, Rosalind, announcing herself in search of the wretch whose verses cry out for Rosalind, teases Orlando, telling him she sees no marks of love in the man who stands before her (AYLI 3.2.357-371). The studied abandon she advocates in a lover is clearly ridiculous, and would doubtless receive equal or greater censure than that she bestows on his extra-dapper appearance. But the problem of how to convince someone, not that one is a lover, but that one *loves*, remains. In an ideal love situation, the lovers' body should exhibit clear signs of love, providing ultimate outward proofs. But the lover's body, like the lover's poem, may need to point to, even perform, its authenticity. The lover shows us a problem in the idea of the naturally representing body. Both on and off the stage, bodies need to represent/perform their love.

Romeo and Juliet never really struggle with the problem of showing their love – either to each other or to us. Whatever might be shown on stage or film, the second chorus (if included), establishes their love for us. It does so in a remarkable move away from skepticism and in a way that forestalls criticism and demands our unthinking sympathy:

Now old desire doth in his deathbed lie,
And young affection gapes to be his heir.
That fair for which love groaned for and would die,
With tender Juliet matched, is now not fair.
Now Romeo is beloved and loves again,
Alike bewitchèd by the charm of looks;
But to his foe supposed he must complain,
And she steal love's sweet bait from fearful hooks.
Being held a foe, he may not have access
To breathe such vows as lovers use to swear,
And she as much in love, her means much less
To meet her new belovèd anywhere.
But passion lends them power, time means, to meet,
Temp'ring extremities with extreme sweet.

Placed at a crucial juncture, the sonnet dwells for the last time on Rosalind and the problematic suddenness of Romeo's surpassing love for Juliet, before moving headlong into urgent action, solving its formal problems as well as the thematic problem of Romeo's unsteady eye.

The critical centre of the problem (and of the sonnet) hinges on the end of the sestet:

Now Romeo is beloved and loves again,
Alike bewitchèd by the charm of looks;

The second line is almost comically damning. Having gone, loudly protesting, where he may examine other beauties, Romeo becomes entranced by Juliet's charms; this is hardly a disruption, but rather a logical extension, of his love affair with beauty. "Again/ Alike". Bewitched again by looks, Romeo's love lies, as the holy friar fears, not in his heart but in his eyes. It is in the play between the two lines that the stress comes through. Loving again, Romeo may love (and be loved) also in return. If the second "now" of the sonnet must gain force, moving beyond the first quatrain, driving us to a new conclusion, it is not that Juliet is now (his) fair, a worthy object of desire, but that Romeo is now *beloved* as well as lover. Romeo may then be bewitched by the charm of Juliet's looks - at him. Is it looking at Juliet's person that compels Romeo's love for her (as for Rosaline), or perceiving her own desiring gaze, its reciprocation (the theme of the balcony scene)? Against Rosaline - oblivious to her undeclared suitor - it is Juliet's desire, not her aloofness, that enchants Romeo. More than reciprocated, Romeo's experience is now shared, and the sonnet deftly establishes both Romeo's desire and that of Juliet.

Somewhat neglected in literary criticism, the second chorus sonnet has commonly been deemed unnecessary in performance. Far from dumb show, the sonnet advances the action by rephrasing events, and situations, already shown, with vague and open reference to the immediate future. Its dramatic function is to supplement the problems of the action and propel it forward, not to take the place of dramatic action. Yet the "looks" with which it plays are not immediately available to the audience and must be described onstage. To some extent, the reference to (and explanation of) "looks" underscores the impossibility of staging desire: it tells what cannot be shown. The lovers can be observed stealing glances at each other, but their "looks" at each other are, we imagine, not fully accessible to the audience.

Film, of course, can employ close ups, shot reverse-shots, and various subjective shots to better show us these looks. The artificiality and the direct address of the chorus sit uncomfortably with modern emotional and artistic sensibilities. *Shakespeare in Love* struggles with the problem of staging this (or any) love story in the public Elizabethan playhouse, with its plentiful, incongruous distractions, incomprehensible and intolerable to modern filmgoers. The cinematic apparatus achieves a compromise between the film's emotional and historical needs, by limiting and focusing a gaze that simulates privacy, able to focus out attention and, importantly, filter out distractions, so that the audience visually experience and seem to share in the lover's absorption in each other. By controlling the audience's gaze, the film can even place the viewer as a receiver of the loving look.

Philip Stubbes' commonplace (though particularly lively) picture of theatrical iniquity offers a colourfully climactic vision of playgoing, where a "flocking and running to Theatres & Curtens" ends in "verye friendly" exit from the theatre to retire to secret conclaves where "they play the Sodomits, or worse" - whatever playing sodomit involves, it is clear that, in these secret enclaves, it is not playacting. Stubbes is more voluble, but less clear, in his description of what precedes in the teeming playhouse. There is a strange conflation of players and playgoers in Stubbes' description of "Playes and Enterludes, where such wanton gestures, such bawdie speeches: such laughing and fleerings: such kissing and bussing: such clipping and culling: Such winckinge and glancinge of wanton eyes, and the like is used, as is wonderfull to behold."⁴¹ While the gestures and speeches belong unambiguously to the stage, the erotic looking and touching that follow may occur between actors or between spectators. The *winckeing and glancinge* of wanton eyes is particularly intriguing, blurring the lines between stage and playhouse. Where is this winking and glancing directed? Is Stubbes describing these signs of desire on stage, as acted between two actors? Or does this suggest also wanton looks out at the audience, looks Romeo and Juliet will presumably need to direct? The look of love stirs passions, on stage and off, and the two are contiguous.

This returns us to Will and Viola, gazing deeply into each other's eyes, almost oblivious to the audience. If we accept that Shakespeare desires us to accept the chorus sonnet's movement away from sceptical criticism to a sympathetic, even passionate, response, how is this to be achieved?

⁴¹ Note that Stubbes, like those he scorns, considers the distractions of the playhouse part of the play.

While they should strictly have eyes for no one else, Romeo and Juliet must woo the audience, as well as each other. However intimate, their love is always a performance.⁴²

The problem of looks, of distinguishing love from lust, proper from improper looks, was a concern, and a reality, for the Elizabethan stage.⁴³ In Renaissance discourse, Lust, Love's demonised bodily other, was closely associated with the stage - considerably less, it would seem, for showing desire on the stage, than for inciting it in the audience by the display of desirable persons. This does not stage love in the way that *Shakespeare in Love* seems to require.⁴⁴ But, importantly, where the audience is unable to fully see Romeo and Juliet's mutual desire - their looks directed at each other - the audience's desire may be used to substitute. We believe in and value their desire and are moved because 'Romeo' and 'Juliet' seem precious and desirable. They individually move the audience to feel their passion, making their worth and desirability crucial. In this, more than simply 'showing' their love, they actively inspire/move a passionate investment.

Returning to the wager in *Shakespeare in Love*, we may ask: how is the audience to be convinced of true love? Shakespeare shows the dissembling, flattering villainy of which a lover's discourse is capable. He repeatedly mocks the forms of love, the marks by which the lover is purportedly recognised, signs effortlessly appropriated by the most consummate liars. And we have considered the dilemma incurred in bringing on a pair of lovers whose pure, mutual love is proved by their exclusive mutual attraction, where the lovers make their role as actors secondary to their role as lovers, and make no moves to woo the audience. One way the audience might be

⁴² The (rhetorical) artificiality of Romeo and Juliet's lovemaking, and of their play in general, has received much attention from critics, delighting and troubling in equal measure. The palmer's sonnet may be seen as a 'natural' expression of mutuality, or as completing the play's pretty and artificial harmonies. Romeo and Juliet's role as actors (both highlighted and suppressed in *Shakespeare in Love*) - a role not reducible to "artifice" - has been less discussed.

⁴³ In his filmic *Romeo and Juliet* (1968), Zeffirelli plays on a distinction between between lower and upper body (housing the remote senses) when he has the friar indulge in a bawdy equivocation: "[N]ot truly in their hearts, but in their... eyes." As the Friar searches for the part of Romeo's body where love may inhabit, eyes seem to substitute for a lower organ. Where does love reside - the play asks in these earlier scenes - in the heart or in the eyes? While lust is a key concept in the period, we should perhaps be careful of automatically identifying love in the heart as 'true' love, love in the eyes as more genital lust. The love that resides in the eyes (in which love enters and from which love's arrows are delivered) is primarily more *mobile*. Fittingly, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, preoccupied with love's movement through eyes, suppresses references to the heart: the word does not appear once in the play. But by the play's end, as I later show, the audience will have found the ostensible distinction between a love that dwells in the heart and one that dwells in the eyes to be maddeningly unhelpful.

persuaded of a love on stage would be by witnessing their *own* passions moved by both, or one, of the lovers. Noting the increased centrality of the passions to the exercise of rhetorical skill in the Renaissance, this seems a significant possibility. In showing love, an equivalence between actor's passion and audience's is not logically persuasive to a modern mentality, but in the Renaissance - when affect was famously transferable and humoral - the audience might be moved more directly in sympathy.

RHETORICAL LOVE

At the close of *Shakespeare in Love*, it is strongly suggested that Will's subsequent plays will draw their power from his love for Viola. But the film seems a little anxious about allowing Shakespeare, who has just won for himself a place in the queen's favour, to *use* his experience in love. Will must be seen to relinquish all his claims and desires as a poet playwright. He tells Viola he will not write again. Viola can then give him her blessing, and even prompt him, to write *Twelfth Night*. Just to make sure, she drafts the first scene.

In the film, working alongside notions of love and emotion somewhat alien to Shakespeare's time, and its 'natural' stage aesthetic, is an underlying modern notion of art that excludes rhetoric. Given as an expression of love for Viola, we see sonnet 18 restored - not only to simple romantic heterosexuality, but also to a notion of art that shies away from persuasion and distinguishes between rhetorical and artistic function. In *Shakespeare in Love*, Will's work is a pure expression of his feelings, given purest expression where he performs in his own play. Beyond 'expressing' the artist's inward feelings and thought, the art object simply 'means' or 'is'. This is what Will and Viola do on stage. But the renaissance artwork *did* - it persuaded.

I began by discussing the film's objection to poetical, or feigned, love. Described in terms of 'nature' and 'artifice', 'Truth' and aesthetic truth appear natural enemies.⁴⁵ But what emerges in a reading of Renaissance texts is the possibility of the two as *linked*, rather than inherently inimical. Rosemond Tuve has pointed to the criteria that governed the Elizabethan poet: criteria

⁴⁴ This provides an unsatisfying solution to the problem of representing love, for reasons I will discuss later, and I will be only peripherally interested in the much-discussed erotics of Shakespeare's stage and the associated problems of male and female bodies.

⁴⁵ I later discuss the effect of a naturalistic theory of acting on the problem.

that are obscured by modern distinctions between 'nature and artifice'⁴⁶, and 'emotion and thought'⁴⁷, and by a notion of the autonomous art object that underplays the role of persuasion in Elizabethan poetry.

The effective/affective representation of love, was key in Renaissance courtship.⁴⁸ Love and acting are linked at the outset in their common reliance on persuasion – an aim best achieved, in the Renaissance, with rhetorical performance. Brian Vickers explains the centrality of rhetoric in the period: "[t]he Renaissance valued rhetoric because it would move people to thought or action, whether they wanted to or not, by mobilizing the will... Renaissance rhetoricians differ from their medieval counterparts in an increased stress on persuasion and the greater prominence given to the will."⁴⁹ This 'will' did not exclude the passions. Under 'passions' – the ubiquitous term in Renaissance use - desires and emotions were not discriminated.⁵⁰ This perhaps allowed love and rhetoric to enjoy a special natural relationship at the time - one that today would appear markedly less self-explanatory. The grand status accorded rhetoric in the period is difficult to understand and easy to distort with our contemporary distinction between "feelings and thoughts"⁵¹, which separates the rational appeal of logical argument from the devalued, irrational appeal to the emotions or senses, so that rhetoric must seem a trifling bag of tricks. Vickers accordingly quotes Tuve's brilliantly balanced appreciation of Renaissance "affect", an understanding that will inform my own discussion of stage affect: "Rhetorical devices 'move a reader's affections,' but also 'affect his judgements; they move him to feel intensely, to will, to act, to understand, to believe, to change his mind.'"⁵²

This versatility would have been enabled by early modern humoral physiology. Joseph Roach reads the seemingly contradictory physiological accounts of the time and pictures the early

⁴⁶ Tuve, Rosemond. *Elizabethan and Metaphysical Imagery: Renaissance Poetic and Twentieth-century Critics*. (London and Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1947) 35-7

⁴⁷ Tuve, *Elizabethan Imagery*. 1947. 183

⁴⁸ Hence, in part, my focus on the love that *Shakespeare in Love* is interested in: young, heterosexual love.

⁴⁹ Vickers, Brian. 'On the Practicalities of Renaissance Rhetoric' in *Rhetoric Revalued: Papers from the International Society for the History of Rhetoric*. Ed. Vickers (Binghamton: Centre for Medieval and Early Renaissance Studies, 1982) 133-41

⁵⁰ "For early modern writers, desire – and feelings such as love, anger, or sadness – are all states of a single kind, and all answer to the rough definition of passion... they regard the similarities between these states as more significant than the differences" James, Susan. *Passion and Action: The Emotions in Seventeenth-Century Philosophy*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997) 7

⁵¹ Tuve in Vickers, *Practicalities*. 135

⁵² Vickers, *Practicalities*. 135, my emphasis

modern body, in Dawson's paraphrase, as "a mixed bag,"⁵³ a slopping bag of humours, but animated and equipped for rapid, sensitive, transformation under the influence of responsive, vital humours. Roused, the passions would have a bifold power: combining the speed and suppleness of vital spirits and the implacable, obdurate, constituting substance of the humoral body. Passions were both volatile and protean, and determinedly material, giving us some sense of how the sudden, but profound, metamorphoses of the lover might be imagined to take place.⁵⁴ Once moved, then, the passions were potent forces. The confident orator could be expected to want to capitalise on this latent power – even at some risk to himself.⁵⁵ Further, Roach points to popular theories of *pneuma*, as quasiphysical forces moving both in and between bodies. Thus, the bodies of others also become (quite materially) susceptible to humoral influence. Where passions are coupled with the will (as they may be in passionate rhetoric), affections become even more powerful.

Rhetoric played a central role in early modern thought, one our rather diminished use of the term tends to obscure. In this dissertation, I will be centrally concerned with (in Tuve's words) "the final determination of efficacy – efficacy upon the affections, as generally understood"⁵⁶ in Renaissance thinking, in which "... the unity of the process *moving: persuading* is not disturbed."⁵⁷ The early modern audience was, ideally, to be moved - a goal in which, as Tuve reminds us, thought and emotion cannot be separated. Under humoral theory, the passions were physical entities that were literally moved in order to affect the body; their physical movement *constituted* emotion. The Renaissance audience was moved (in attraction or repulsion), and also *moved to* - to feel and to act. In our terms, the first would involve an emotional response, while the second would require persuasion. But the Renaissance observe no such necessary distinction.

⁵³ Dawson, Anthony B. and Paul Yachnin. *The Culture of Playgoing in Shakespeare's England: A Collaborative Debate*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001) 17

⁵⁴ "An implied belief in the body's magical powers of instantaneous self-transformation, a fascination with the possibilities of quicksilver alteration of corporeal shape on command, sets rhetorical theories of acting apart from their successors." (*Player's Passion*. 41) Roach, who is interested finally in the 'darker side' of Renaissance acting theory, takes as his central metaphor, Proteus, the water spirit, who could change his shape at will, but then risked losing his own. My interest begins with Proteus the lover, Shakespeare's early representation of the man metamorphosed with a mistress, and with those who would personate his dramatic transformations.

⁵⁵ As Roach shows (*Player's Passion*), under Galenic-Renaissance physiology, the seventeenth century actor risked considerable spiritual and physical danger – not from his 'role', but from his own passions. But in the more secular early modern theatre, it is the audience who are more often identified as in moral danger from the *persuasive* actor. Hence, in part, my focus on rhetoric and persuasion

⁵⁶ Tuve, *Elizabethan Imagery*. 180

Renaissance thinkers like Wright and Wilson variously reproduced, and grappled with, Ciceronian and Quintilian emphases on the role of the passions in rhetoric. Admittedly, in the explosion of rhetorical activity that came out of the European Renaissance, a period in which “rhetoric attained its greatest pre-eminence, both in terms of its range of influence and in value”,⁵⁸ not all texts accorded the passions equal importance. But Vickers has pointed persuasively to a general trend in the period between 1540 and 1640, in which “an increased stress on persuasion via the passions led to an important readjustment within the theory and practice of rhetoric ” as moving the passions, became the rhetorician’s most prized aim.⁵⁹

In Elizabethan discourse, love is seen variously as the weakest and strongest emotion, weak in its inconstancy and short concentration span, potent in its immediate effects. As a passion, then, it is powerful.⁶⁰ More than metamorphic, Renaissance love was also mimetic, allying it powerfully with early modern rhetoric and the humoral body. In a rhetorical model that did not divorce thoughts from feelings, or body from mind, passions were conceived as peculiarly capable of moving others – quite directly.

If we imagine Queen Elizabeth, in the early stages of Shakespeare’s career, brokering a wager to see ‘true love’ / ‘love... true’ on the stage, it need not be imagined to be for any intrinsic value of love - which would make its satisfactory embodiment naturally the more challenging. The wager might pass without raising the eyebrows of her court or of cultural historians because the evoking of passions would, in the milieu, show the measure of a great actor and (to perhaps a lesser extent) a great playwright. Love would be valued more for its ability to move and less as a stable locus of inner truth and authenticity, the thinking that necessitates the suppression of the actor in *Shakespeare in Love*.

⁵⁷ Tuve, *Elizabethan Imagery*. 182 see also Susan James on the lack in the seventeenth century umbrella term “passions” of a distinction between desires and feelings. *Passion and Action*. 7

⁵⁸ Vickers, *Practicalities*. 133

⁵⁹ Vickers, *Practicalities*. 133

FEELING LOVE

For Will to win his wager, to be decided by Elizabeth, two conditions not stated in the terms of the wager must be met: the Queen must be persuaded of love on the stage, and the Queen must be pleased. The seduction, or more commonly, the “pleasure” (though this suggests only one aspect of seduction) of Shakespeare’s early modern audience is a huge and complex question. Recent investigations into the topic have tended to take as their focus the presence of boys on the stage and the potential for complex erotic identification and desire.⁶¹ *Shakespeare in Love* might draw critical attention for the way it stage manages events to cast Viola, a woman, as Juliet, not for its efforts to put a pair of real lovers on the stage. My project is less overtly gendered, concerned primarily with the way the audience is convinced of passion (particularly love) on the stage. This involves the way that they are moved to feel passion (in their own persons) and to locate it with/in the actor. I will suggest that this seduction involves, not the display of flesh, but the “moving” of flesh (both his own and that of his audience), by a “feeling” actor.

On the early modern stage, the actor who ‘feelingly personates’ does so in a double sense: he both causes feeling in the audience he moves and, to achieve this, moves *himself* to passion. The Elizabethan actor will act *feelingly* (or feel actingly) to inspire a feeling response in the audience.

In his 1604 treatise, “The Passions of the Mind in General”, Thomas Wright explains:

... if we intend to imprint a passion in another, it is requisit first it be stamped in our hearts.... And for this cause the passion which is in our brest, must be the fountaine and origen of al externall actions; & as the internal affection is more vehement, so the external perswasion wil be more potent... the passion proceedeth from the heart, & is blowne about the bodie, face, eies, hands, voice, & so by gestures passeth into our eies, & by sounds into our eares: & as it is qualified, so it worketh in us. ⁶²

⁶⁰ and rhetorical tracts note the limitations of passion, repeatedly point out the impossibility of maintaining and prolonging any intense passionate response

⁶¹ Among these, Laura Levine’s study of early modern antitheatricalism is a direct and useful stimulus for this essay; see her description of the change imagined by the antitheatricalists, in which: “[t]he ‘impressions’ in the actor’s mind are mysteriously transferred to the gazer. In this way the spectator quite literally takes on the identity of the actor” (Levine, Laura. *Men in Women’s Clothing: Anti-theatricality and Effeminization, 1579-1642* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994) 13

“... [I]f we intend to imprint a passion in another, it is requisite first it be stamped in our hearts.... And for this cause the passion which is in our brest, must be the fountaine and origen of all externall actions...” Wright’s argument here is fairly conventional, voicing the commonplace, derived from classical sources,⁶³ that passions are best moved in others by the passion of the speaker, which then allows his body to move ‘naturally’ to show plainly what is in his heart.

Wright’s description of the process seems striking, however, in its resonance with that central picture of Renaissance love theory: the lover’s mimetic body – where the beloved’s visage, its image taken into the heart, is emblazoned in/on the breast of the lover.⁶⁴ Renaissance readers would find themselves in familiar territory when the speaker of the sonnets opens Sonnet 24:

Mine eye hath played the painter, and hath steeled
 Thy beauty’s form in table of my heart
 ...
 ... your true image pictured lies,
 Which in my bosom’s shop is hanging still
 That hath his window’s glazed with thine eyes⁶⁵

Anthony Dawson glosses the conceit: “The lover fashions the image of his beloved but his beloved’s beauty also fashions him, penetrating and setting up shop in his body, unmaning him by making him pregnant with a true image, and opening him to the sun’s gaze by weirdly glazing his breast with the beloved’s eyes”. This extreme mimetic conceit of love, which connects, as Dawson points out, with the early modern ideas of the “materiality of vision, the power of images, the plasticity of the self,”⁶⁶ is one to which I will return at several points. In Renaissance ideal love, love’s (ideal) *forms* are uncommonly powerful, and the lover’s body, constructed of eye and heart, demonstrates perhaps the most extreme relationship with the image or idea(l).⁶⁷

⁶² Wright, *Passions of the Minde*. 174

⁶³ We find the earliest example in Aristotle, continued in Cicero and developed in Quintilian.

⁶⁴ Miller points us to Philoclea in Sidney’s *Arcadia*, who imitated love for Zelmane until she “needed no more paint her face with passions, for passions shone through her face” (*Passion Signified*, 409 also 408)

⁶⁵ The ideal of transparency is considerably complicated by the dominant image of twinned reflection.

⁶⁶ Dawson, *Culture of Playgoing*. 69

⁶⁷ “In any culture where erotic longing provides the central metaphor for spirituality, desire cannot be the equivalent of sexuality. [Renaissance] Erotic desire is physical, but primarily affects the upper body; it is engendered in the eyes and dwells in the heart.” Shuger, Deborah ‘Panel Discussion’ in *Renaissance Discourses of Desire*, edited by Claude Summers and Ted-Larry Pebworth (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1993) 227 Shuger’s sense of the physical focus of Renaissance love discourse, privileging the upper body, seems to sound with the theories of the time, if not with its bawdy subtexts, or practices.

The ostensibly outlandish conceit of the lover's heart retaining, and taking on the nature of, the beloved's dear image, is a powerful one for the period. It models, in corporeal terms, the relationship between ideal and self in love - that strange infection that travels so lightly on eyebeams, but that can profoundly transform a body and a mind.

In the highly rhetorical Renaissance, when rhetoric was bound up with imitation and the moving of passions, these and other poetic tropes of the time that assume for lovers an intimate, inherent relationship with mimesis, placed love in a potentially powerful position within (and allied to) persuasion. The trope of love as radically transformative, metamorphosing men and women psychologically and physically, is among the more familiar Renaissance commonplaces of love. The trope of the poetic lover's bizarre mimetic body works from these assumptions and simply extends what we might call a more 'psychological' insight into the mimetic quality of love. Since Plato and Aristotle, love had been associated with likeness. The enamoured lover yearns to internalise and become like the beloved. He yearns also for a like response from the beloved.

Wright suggests a direct, and quite physical, link between the passions of the speaker and those of the audience. The persuader must "stamp" a passion in his heart so that it may be "imprinted" in another. 'Imprinted', 'stamped', the passions are not generated from within the audience, but present to be shaped from without.⁶⁸ Wright's language here is permeated with the ancient vocabulary of the *imago animi*, imbued with a particular early modern, material, plasticity.⁶⁹ For Wright, moving the emotions of the listeners, requires *impressing* them with one's own passion, impressing not only with the force of one's passionate oratory, but also with its emotional shape, moulding the audience's passion to the shape of one's own. For this mimetic procedure, the rhetorician's passion is essential. But if Wright's orator must impress others' passions with the

The love that is "engendered in the eyes and dwells in the heart" is a potent idea in the period. Whether the Renaissance can really be set apart as a key moment in the cultural evolution of the Western body (privileging the remote senses), or Shuger's spiritualised Renaissance love said to deserve any special attention, it seems at least fair to say that Renaissance love discourse privileges the upper body, particularly in its reference to the senses, with sight and hearing uppermost. These are also the senses upon which the theatrical experience depends.

⁶⁸ "... 'imprinting' is a frequently-used image significant for its suggestion that the passions are not so much elicited from within but impressed as a copy from without." (Miller, *Passion Signified*. 412)

⁶⁹ Wright cites Galen's story of a woman who "beholding a most beautiful picture, conceived and brought forth a most beautiful child. *Passions of the Minde*. P66. Paul Yachnin's chapter on early modern vision includes a delightful illustration of the power of "impression" from Mancini, who recommended hanging "lascivious" pictures in private rooms (only) "where one has to do with one's spouse"; these "serve to make beautiful, healthy, and charming children... because each parent, through seeing the picture, imprints in their seed a similar constitution which has been seen in the object or figure". (*Culture of Playgoing*. 73-4)

shape of his own, how is his inner passion to be impressed – and from where? Have we misunderstood Wright? Is *Shakespeare in Love*'s strategy the solution to Wright's problem?

With his own early modern assumptions about the materiality of passion, Wright amplifies and elaborates on Cicero's less ambitious classical claim⁷⁰: "... nor is it possible that the judge should feel [emotions], or that he should be moved to compassion and tears unless all those sensations which the orator would awaken in the judge shall appear to be deeply felt and experienced by the orator himself."⁷¹ Wilson's *Arte of Rhetorique*, an explicit work of rhetorical oratory which also places notable emphasis on the "moving of affections", comes even closer to (mis)quoting Cicero's *De Oratore* where Wilson insists on the need for the persuasive orator to be himself persuaded:

Neither can any good be done at all, when we have said all that ever we can,
excepte we bryn the same affections in our awne heate, the which wee would the
Judges should beare towards our awne matter⁷²

In the context of Wilson's general project⁷³ (and Cicero's modest claim), this suggestive excerpt may be intended simply to suggest that the orator empathise with the **plaintiffs** case, thus enabling himself to defend it as if it were his own. Wilson's use of the old Ciceronian commonplace: "[h]e that will stirre affections to other, muste firste be moved himself" can be overinterpreted, and gives no evidence in itself of a developed concept of the passions as directly

Such examples were facilitated by early modern thought about vision. More generally, this echoes and demonstrates the persistent power of the Aristotelian "imago animi" (see Roach, *Player's Passion*. 41)

⁷⁰ Wright, *Passions of the Minde*. 172 "except all those motions which the orator would stir up in the judge, be first imprinted and marked in the orator himself." This, in turn, derives from Aristotle comment in his *Poetics*: "...they are most persuasive and affecting who are under the influence of actual passion... We share the agitation of those who appear to be truly agitated – the anger of those who appear to be truly angry. Hence it is that poetry demands either great natural quickness of parts, or an enthusiasm allied to madness. By the first of these we mould ourselves with facility to the imitation of every form; by the other, transported out of ourselves, we become what we imagine." *Aristotle: Poetics, translated by Thomas Twining*. (London: Everyman's Library, J. M. Dent and Sons, Ltd., 1941) 33

⁷¹ Cicero, *On Oratory and Orators* trans. J.S. Watson. (London: George Bell. 1876) II. xlv. 189. E.W. Sutton's 1939/42 translation preserves the emphasis on impression: "the emotions must be "visibly stamped, or rather branded, on the advocate himself." *Cicero de Oratore* trans. E.W. Sutton and H Rackham. (London: William Heinemann, 1942)

⁷² Wilson, Thomas. *Arte of Rhetorique*. Ed. Thomas J Derrick *The Renaissance Imagination* Vol 1 (New York and London: Garland, 1971) 272

⁷³ Wilson presents a practical rhetorical treatise. This particular passage follows a pedestrian section that details, more the manner in which information must be ordered and communicated, than the manner in which it may be imaginatively brought to life.

communicable, and contaminating.⁷⁴ But Wilson goes on to use the metaphor, again borrowed from Cicero⁷⁵ (somewhat amplified) of zealous fire - a common figure in love rhetoric. “[O]ne that is heated... shall set the other on fire with like affection”⁷⁶ In this way, Wilson suggests, the fiery stomach pours fire into a tongue that then makes other stomachs fiery. Wilson stresses the elemental physicality of the passions; he includes a final elemental sympathy to parallel his use of fire, in the form of tears that “moysteth” bodies beyond that of the rhetorician.

But this seems to lead us no further in escaping our dilemma: if the orator can impress the minds of others in the image of his own, how is he to impress his own mind? Notably, the *tokens* of passion seem here to be directly communicable; indeed they are almost indistinguishable from the passions themselves. This is unsurprising given the special physicality of affect in humoral theory, where passions were associated with, but not entirely reducible to, humours. Renaissance passions were imagined in terms of the agitation of humours. The physical signs of passion (generated by their movement)⁷⁷ would be naturally difficult to distinguish from the passions themselves.

The passions could be both conceived and *experienced* as bodily. Anne Ferry notes the tendency, in the sixteenth century, for ‘feeling’ “to be closer [in meaning] to sensation than to emotion, or to ignore the distance between the two.”⁷⁸ A couple of lines from *As You Like It* play on the (im?)materiality of passion, particularly as stirred by rhetoric.

This is no flattery. These are counsellors
That feelingly persuade me what I am. (2.1.10-1)

There is no rhetoric in the icy wind that blows on the banished Duke’s back in the forests of Ardenne, delighting him with its unflattering, immediate truth, far from the deceptions and seductions of court. But, at court, the greatest rhetoricians would have been able to “feelingly

⁷⁴ In Cicero himself, the matter of ‘appearing’ to be moved is ambiguous. Antonius goes on to recount how, pleading a case, he was overcome by genuine emotion; he ends explaining to Sulphicus this he tells him this as a good teacher, to help him to be more passionate in his speechmaking. *Oratore* II, xlviii. 196. For a discussion of this doubleness in the Renaissance see Attridge, Derek. ‘Puttenham’s Perplexity: Nature, Art, and the Supplement in Renaissance Poetic Theory’ in *Literary Theory / Renaissance Texts*. Eds. Parker, Patricia and David Quint (1986, Baltimore: John Hopkins UP.) 257-279

⁷⁵ Cicero, *Oratore*. II. xlv. 188, 190

⁷⁶ Wilson, *Rhetorique*. 273

⁷⁷ Think particularly of the movement of liquids and vapours that explained or described the physical processes of blushing, weeping, sighing, etc.

persuade”, working on the Duke’s mind and very senses. The kind of indubitable physical confirmation the usurped Duke values in the forest is valued also at court.⁷⁹ Where affections are understood as physical phenomena, to work on feelings is then to work on the body. To speak “feelingly” (to the point) the skilled rhetorician would ideally be required to reach to the quick (of the body), so that his audience may see his point “feelingly”.

Wilson’s orator, whose body imitates the passion within, attempts to move the minds, but also the bodies⁸⁰, of his listeners; this is the means, as well as the proof, of his success. To work on the body is also to work with the body. Dawson describes the physical component of theatrical pleasure: “Actors use their bodies both to represent and to affect. Audiences respond with their bodies as well as their minds”.⁸¹ When the Elizabethan actor acts feelingly, this feeling is both emotional and visceral. The orator stirs up emotion in his body, and also with his body. In this dissertation, I will try to show how (the passions of) the mind may be imagined to follow (the signs of) the body, explaining both how Wright and Wilson’s passionate orator moves his audience, and how he moves himself, to passion.

‘A Lovers Complaint’ demonstrates, and cleverly embodies, a kind of affective trap given special force by early modern notions of mimetic persuasion and the passions. The complaining woman describes herself as originally impassive, won over and undone by a remarkable combination of argument and theatrical performance⁸² that her complaint vividly recreates for us. With obsessive, even loving, attention, she catalogues -almost blazons - her seducer’s supposed physical proofs of passion, culminating in an impassioned lament:

O that infected moisture of his eye,
O that false fire which in his cheek so glowed,
O that forced thunder from his heart did fly,

⁷⁸ Ferry, *Inward Language*. 11, see also 12

⁷⁹ “... the mind is not assailable unlesse it be by *sensible* approaches” Puttenham *The Art of English Poesie* III xix, in Tuve, *Elizabethan Imagery*. 86. (my emphasis)

⁸⁰ Looking back to Wright, one notes his striking emphasis on the role of the body in rhetoric. Despite his use of the trumpet metaphor, Wright treats not the voice, but the entire, gesturing body, emphasising what comes in at the eyes, along with what comes in at the ears. This interest in the body as a rhetorical tool is not peculiar to Wright, but is unusually pronounced in his exposition. His comments might serve well in an Elizabethan acting manual.

⁸¹ Dawson, *Culture of Playgoing*. 13

⁸² ‘A Lover’s Complaint’ perfectly demonstrates Tuve’s argument about the irreducibility of rhetoric to categories of “thinking and feeling” (*Elizabethan Imagery*. 183) and, equally, of argument and performance.

O that sad breath his spongy lungs bestowed,
O all that borrowed motion seeming owed
Would yet again betray the fore-betrayed,
And new pervert a reconcilèd maid. (323-9)

The story is an old one, but Shakespeare is particularly alive to its ironies. The fallen woman's wooer manages to win her to sympathy - specifically, to shed tears for him - and then, with no ties to his role as lover, deftly changes places with her by abandoning her, leaving her to shed tears for herself. Tears, not argument, clinch the deal.

To make the weeper laugh, the laugher weep,
He had the dialect and different skill,
Catching all passions in his craft of will, (124-6)

Tears are a strong motif at many places in the poem, and play a key role in the dramatic development. Having (in a bizarre conceit) thrown down at her feet his supplication, along with that of the women who supplicate him - reminding her of their tears - her wooer finally sheds tears before her... and hers cannot be not far away.

"For lo, his passion, but an art of craft,
Even there resolved my reason into tears. (295-6)

"Infected moisture" indeed. The seducer's craft of passionate manipulation is rather in the mode of Wilson's prescribed use of tears, in *The Arte of Rhetorique*, to 'naturally' moisten other eyes. The obsessive horror at the centre of the lovers' complaint is that her wooer was able, by art, not simply to convince her, but to convince her of, and by, *his conviction*. Yet he never loved her! The artful seducer could mimic a passion he did not feel in order to elicit a like passion from her.

A Lover's Complaint presents two commonplaces of classical and Renaissance oratory. In the lover's tale, it shows the importance of physical delivery to rhetorical persuasion (and then effects the reader's own merely by describing the seducer's delivery). It suggests also the importance of the passions in such persuasion. More closely examined, it demonstrates the Renaissance model for perfect persuasion, which is also the goal of love: passionate physical imitation.

The reader - perhaps particularly the modern reader, for whom day to day discourse is saturated with (pop)psychological causal explanations - will tend to narrativise the lover's seduction. It then becomes clear that the woman, taking the seducer's tears as a guarantee of authentic feeling, lets down her guard, giving him the opportunity to persuade her. This simple narrative provides a pat psychological account of the seduction, negating the need to understand the mechanics of the alchemic trick that turns our heroine's reason into tears, where reason is quasi-physical and the metamorphosis more than metaphoric. Yet the physical affinity of tears for tears (seen in Wilson) seems, in the logic of the time, to *precede* this narrative logic. Bodies move bodies - and thus, minds. Later, I will turn to texts that suggest that, in the Renaissance, it was not problematic to imagine the causal relationship of body and mind reversed, such that we imagine bodies passionately moved before mind/feelings, and even leading emotional response. First, I will look to the plays to consider how lovers conceive and use their bodies in love.

CHAPTER TWO : IDEAL LOVE

SURPASSING LOVE

1. Love Melts

Romeo's Juliet is a transcendent, absolute love: she is beyond compare, though her very incomparability is constructed by Romeo in false terms of comparison with Rosaline. The second sonnet marks the point at which Rosaline is surpassed. Once the problem of Rosaline is dismissed, Romeo and Juliet's love is established and the problems that follow are problems to love, never really problems in love. It might be argued that *Romeo and Juliet* is not really a play about love at all – or at least not about love in Shakespeare. Despite its iconic status, perhaps because of it, the play can certainly be made to say very little about Shakespeare's concerns as suggested in other less transcendent (appropriated) plays. A different Bard film might start with *Two Gentlemen* and, instead of identifying a transcendent break in *Romeo and Juliet*, show how the early play contains the concerns and themes Shakespeare was to endlessly revisit.

The first sign of the power of erotic love - even (and perhaps especially) for Romeo - is its ability to challenge or negate other bonds, especially former loves. Such negation, generally total, is characterised by a strange, alchemical logic of melting and dissolving that suggests the total evaporation of the love bond (while such total repudiation ironically suggests the bond's original integrity). In Shakespeare's plays, "dissolve" refers most often to the dissolution of the mortal bonds of life, and once, in Falstaff's letter in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, to wedlock: that 'world-without-end bargain'. "Melt" is repeatedly associated with a dubious liberty from bonds and, perhaps against expectations of mildness, is placed repeatedly in the mouths of villains.

The love-thwarting 'villains' of *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, speak of love in terms of melting: of ice that turns to water or impressed wax that, in heat, soon loses its strength and shape. In speech that fluctuates erratically between reference to the heat that now consumes his former love for Julia and to the coldness that now marks his former friendship, Proteus perceives his love thawed - "[w]hich like a waxen image 'gainst a fire/ Bears no impression of the thing it was." (2.4.199-200) The Duke, Silvia's scheming father, confidently declares:

This weak impress of love is as a figure
 Trenchèd in ice, which with an hour's heat
 Dissolves to water and doth lose his form.
 A little time will melt her frozen thoughts,
 And worthless Valentine shall be forgot. (TGV 3.2, 6-10)

In Renaissance texts, ice was commonly and systematically associated with chastity. Her frozen thoughts melted, Sylvia's ice may (and must) be cracked. Although the Duke, unlike Hermia's father, or Juliet's after Tybalt's death, seems to give his daughter unrestricted time to come to her sense of duty, he may still pander her - not only to his choice of suitor, but also to lust, if time is not enough to thaw and heat. If there is a distinction between love and desire, it is perhaps to be found in desire's metaphors of heat surpassing heat, vs. love's more complex metaphors of sympathy, reflection, making and unmaking. A little earlier, Proteus described his conversion with the conventional association of love/lust and heat and a simple additive logic of intensification, which reduces the problem of replacing one love with another, to a simple question of one 'heat' exceeding and thus driving out another. His discourse is marked by a masculine (teleological) privileging of heat.⁸³

Even as one heat another heat expels,
 Or as one nail by strength drives out another,
 So the remembrance of my former love
 Is by a newer object quite forgotten. (2.4.185-8)⁸⁴

The case for Silvia is slightly more complicated. To describe not Silvia, but her love, as a figure trenched in ice is somewhat unusual. The Duke speaks of a specific "weak impress" of love: the impress of his daughter's mind. In its allusion to both the figure in ice and 'impression', his choice of word mobilises imagery both of ice and of wax⁸⁵, associations which expose the terms

⁸³ See theories of sexual origin in which women's bodies would try to exceed their feminine state and become male but fail to generate sufficient heat.

⁸⁴ See also Benvolio to Romeo "Tut, man, one fire burns out another's burning" (Rom 1.2.43)

⁸⁵ And possibly the bawdy play on lover's weight. See notes to the Oxford Edition.

Venus and Adonis provides an even stronger association of wax and ice:

What wax so frozen but dissolves with temp'ring
 And yields at last to every light impression? (565-5)

in which Sylvia's malleable desire and person are conceived.⁸⁶ In love, the lover carried, and was marked inwardly by, the ideal image of the beloved. Presumably, a new heat (after a period of cooling or thawing – as you prefer) may then see Silvia ready to be impressed a second time, with a new love.

Proteus continues his argument in support of forsaking Julia for Silvia in terms that go beyond the simple logic of heat exceeding heat. Talking now of love, not desire, Proteus uses the imagery of wax and of melting:

for now my love is thawed,
Which like a waxen image 'gainst a fire
Bears no impression of the thing it was. (TGV 2.4.193-5)

Taking Proteus' description of his transfer of love, and his vision of love as an image or impression, in wax, we perhaps understand further the Duke's confidence and his dismissal of his daughter's desires. To her father, Silvia's icy impress is not her (female) desire, but the refusal to admit male desire in the absence of Valentine. Time away from Valentine's exiled desire will make her suitably malleable to her father and to Thurio. Significantly, Silvia's strong retention, in love, of her lover's masculine image is not seen to impart to her any of his masculine strength, presumably because Valentine is feminised in love.⁸⁷

In *A Midsummer Nights' Dream*, Lysander will stand accused of having stolen, not only the heart of Egeus' daughter, but also "the impression of her fantasy" in her "unhardened youth" (1.1.32, 35), for having ruined her precious female pliability. It is not the loss of Hermia's fantasy that galls her father, so much as Lysander's power of "impression" over her feminine malleability. Hermia is, to her father, "but a form in wax, / By him imprinted, and within his power to leave the figure or disfigure it."⁸⁸ *Lucrece* gives the appropriate aphorism⁸⁹

⁸⁶ Brutus, husband of Portia, speaks of steeling women's "melting spirits" (JC 2.1.121)

⁸⁷ His masculine status, along with Proteus', is only really restored when he breaks from Silvia.

⁸⁸ What say you, Hermia? Be advised, fair maid.
To you your father should be as a god,
One that composed your beauties, yea, and one
To whom you are but as a form in wax,
By him imprinted, and within his power
To leave the figure or disfigure it. (MND1.1.46-51)

⁸⁹ But a maxim horribly at odds with the scene before us: the single still tableau where, Tarquin having fled, Lucrece and her maid stand a pretty pair a pretty while, weeping side-by-side and hand-in-hand. This

For men have marble, women waxen minds,
And therefore are they formed as marble will. (1240-1)

The passage goes on to argue the purely *reflective* quality of women, not as vessels, holding whatever thing they are made to bear, but formed by it and into its image, as wax: that quintessentially impressionable substance. This parallels the Petrarchan discourse of love, in which the lover carries an impression of the beloved – unsurprisingly, where love (holding the beloved’s image) is generally considered effeminising. Love/wooing is determined by gender, not in the fairly neutral sense that it involves men and women and, inevitably, gender politics, but more particularly in the period’s conception of *love* as effeminate and, beyond that, effeminising.⁹⁰ Love is defined as a state of (feminine) impressionability.

2. Blind Love

Helena, like Silvia, is marked as a mere woman of wax, erotically stamped by her father and she enters a *Midsummer Night’s Dream* seeming to bear traces of Julia’s grievance at the hands of Proteus, who abandoned love melted to a blank.

For ere Demetrius looked on Hermia’s eyne
He hailed down oaths that he was only mine,
And when this hail some heat from Hermia felt,
So he dissolved, and showers of oaths did melt. (MND 1.1.242-5)

Love is frequently defined as a ghostly impressure in the unhardened wax of the mind. Love seems itself to have no substance of its own, only a transitory (if powerful) shape. Passion can be engendered in others, shaped, Wright and Wilson tell us, with the shape of the speaker’s passion; the passion of love creates like love. But what of the original that imprints such forms of love? Distilled and contained, the love potion of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* seems to hold out the

maxim comes at the heart of a moralising interruption from which the innocence of the scene never recovers, as Lucrece withdraws, appalled by her maid’s uncomprehending mimetic emotional response.
⁹⁰ see Rackin, Phyllis. ‘Foreign country: The place of women and sexuality in Shakespeare’s historical world’ in *Enclosure Acts: sexuality, property and culture in Early Modern England* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994) 69

promise of a more positive identity. But Greenblatt suggests that the love potion can more usefully be read as the mobility, not the essence, of love.⁹¹

Desires in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* are intense, irrational, and alarmingly mobile... No human being in the play experiences a purely abstract, objectless desire; when you desire, you desire someone. But the love juice is the distilled essence of erotic mobility itself, and it is appropriately in the power of the fairies... [who] seem to embody the principle of polytropic desire...⁹²

The fairies move mortal love, but not from themselves. The love potion is love intercepted and deflected (both in its function and its mythology). When you desire, you desire someone. But this does not make love any less general. The young lovers of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* are notoriously hard to tell apart. Their identities seem at times almost entirely a function of their love function: lover or beloved, of Hermia or Helena, Lysander or Demetrius. Ironically, while they passionately argue for the unique and irreplaceable qualities of their beloved (qualities which, at least on reading, are little more than names), their identities are almost entirely defined by love. Helena's fantasy of taking on Hermia's attributes is meaningless, where her attributes are a function of Demetrius' love.

Sickness is catching. O, were favour so!
Your words I catch, fair Hermia; ere I go,
My ear should catch your voice, my eye your eye,
My tongue should catch your tongue's sweet melody.
Were the world mine, Demetrius being bated,
The rest I'd give to be to you translated. (1.1.186-91)

Helena would become Hermia, be translated into her, to become the apple of Demetrius' eye. But not once does she imagine resorting to disguise. And much of the play's fun and freshness indeed lies in the way it creates comic confusion without disguise or crossdressing. But, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* also involves Shakespeare most full, magical, metamorphosis. Helena imagines more than perfectly mimicking Hermia's parts: her speech, voice, looks. Her

⁹¹ This interpretation fits neatly with the flower's originary myth, which associates it with the wayward flight of Cupid's arrow.

⁹² Greenblatt, Stephen. 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' in *The Norton Shakespeare* (NY: Norton, 1997) 910

discourse involves taking these into herself to effect a transformation. Like the Petrarchan lover, Helena would interiorise Helena's image in order to exteriorise that image. In this way she would become attractive to the object of her affection, Demetrius, by matching the image he carries in his heart in hers. I have described the full workings of the conceit of the lover's mimetic body: where the lover's heart takes in the image of the beloved, such that the beauty of that image may show its glory on the outside of the body, transforming the lover with a likeness of the beloved.

One might assume the fanciful images of Renaissance love poetry should have currency only for a discussion of a very narrow courtly experience, having little to do with the way people really saw the world and themselves. But an examination of the role of the eye in love discourse, and in the Renaissance body, shows the assumptions of early modern scientific (medical) and commonsense wisdom as less removed from the fanciful imaginings of Renaissance love poetry than we might think. In love, eyes could be imagined as potential wounds or as strung arrows, almost a caricature of the neo-Aristotelian and Platonic theories that informed both medical and popular thinking about vision. The first, and less immediately striking, of these posits the eye as passive receiver of images. The second imagines the eye actively discharging emissions necessary to create the image.⁹³ The Platonic view thus informs the poetic image of the eye emitting beams of light, but also is also present in Bacon's comment in 'Of Love', where the power of love is related, somewhat bizarrely, to that of envy and the malevolent "evil eye"⁹⁴. Bacon imagines that, in both love and envy, the will may act (through the eyes) on other bodies. This emphasises the radical *interconnectivity* of bodies as well as the power of the mind or will to influence flesh. We see this in *Romeo and Juliet* in the Chorus' rehearsal of Juliet's "looks". It is a picture of attractive symmetries, though Romeo and Juliet's very equality is problematic. The sinister cast given Juliet's will in "bewitched... charms" associates her with Bacon's evil, emitting, wilful eye. Her physical charms are relatively innocuous against her active erotic desire, touched with witchcraft.⁹⁵ Like the eye on the Renaissance anatomist's table⁹⁶, Juliet is

⁹³ Stephen Greenblatt has pointed to the pervasive materiality of vision in the period (related to the Platonic theory), the assumption that "accurate representation depended upon material emanation and exchange." He demonstrates how, "even in Hamlet's familiar account" of the mirror which "shows the very age and body of the time, his form and pressure" we see the signs of a peculiarly early modern materiality in images and vision. The word "pressure" (the impression achieved by applying pressure) suggests a material force common both to seeing and reflection, and the assumption of some material exchange in the process. *Shakespearean Negotiations: The Circulation of Social Energy in Renaissance England*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999) 8

⁹⁴ Bacon, 1985. pp30-1 see also Reginald Scot's *The Discoverie of Witchcraft* (1584) for the (evil) eye as both allowing entry and actively emitting, acting on other eyes.

⁹⁵ "The cluster of thought 'eyes-influence-fascination-witchcraft-love' is of course almost painfully familiar in Elizabethan and Jacobean poetry." (Bamforth, 1952. p34)

neither total object nor complete subject. Looks may be a matter of will, making and shaping – and not just in the eye of the beholder; looks may physically work on other bodies

When a distraught, jilted Helena exclaims to Hermia: “Sickness is catching. O, were favour so!” the patent irony is that love or favour *is* generally contagious, as the play will show. But, in this play, lovers need not catch love from lovers’ eyes: the capacity for infection is all their own, contained in their own persons. Helena implores Hermia:

O, teach me how you *look*, and with what art
You sway the motion of Demetrius’ heart. (1.1.192-3, my emphasis)

Hermia’s “look” (as Helena describes it) is, ambiguous: suggesting both active and passive, how she looks at Demetrius as well as how she looks to him – though the Hermia of this scene fervently protests she does nothing to encourage his affection for her. This suggests the ambiguity about looks that I have suggested is particularly facilitated in the early modern period by the enduring presence of theories of the eye inherited from Plato and Aristotle. But in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, eyes seem to have no Platonic spirit or pneuma – no ability to wound other eyes, to command love. Ironically, in a play where love has magical powers, where the poison from Cupid’s stray arrow continues to claim victims, the lovers’ sickly Aristotelian eyes are sources only of vulnerability. Helena cannot learn how Hermia looks – all is in Demetrius’ eye. Under the spell of the flower, Demetrius and Lysander, open to impression, fall in love and are impressed with whatever enters their afflicted eyes.

Helena, who carries Demetrius in her heart, would seek to carry the image of Hermia, Demetrius’ beloved, to match the image in his heart. When Lysander wakes in the forest, eyes misted with love potion, and pronounces himself enamoured of Helena, he declares, ridiculously

Transparent Helena, nature shows art
That through thy bosom makes me see thy heart. (2.2.110-11)

The conceit of mimetic love is utterly confounded by its use here. Lysander is clearly wrong. But when he returns, he returns with proof, and may move the audience, for a moment to pity.

⁹⁶ See Lobanov-Rostovsky, Sergei. ‘Taming the Basilisk’ in *The Body in Parts*, edited by David Hillman and Carla Mazzio. London: Routledge, 1997. 195-217

Look when I vow, I weep; and vows so born,
In their nativity all truth appears.” (3.2.124-5)

These lines may be performed with a real depth of feeling and pathos, showing their speaker’s confusion and pain. Lysander sees the marks of love in Helena – and is mistaken, to the audience’s derision and delight. But the marks he perceives on his own body are perceived by the audience as well. When Lysander weeps real tears of love, it becomes impossible to say that he is not truly in love. In some ways, he is a victim of the ‘lover’s complaint’, though here it is his own signs that convince him of his own love.

Lysander’s isolating blindness to Helena’s heart goes beyond the comedy of that particular scene. Helena imagines becoming Hermia and - in the most significant way available to the play - she does. Her wish is granted and she becomes Demetrius’ beloved; Hermia and Helena’s position-identities are effectively switched. But when the women meet each other, roles reversed, they are utterly unable to sympathise, or even identify, with each other.⁹⁷ Seen in this light, sympathy in love becomes a fraught and synthetic operation.

⁹⁷ Shakespeare refers at some points, to the notion that lovers, in their common lament, sympathise with each other. In its most extreme and explicit form we have the rather contorted proposal of sympathy employed by the seducer in ‘A Lover’s Complaint’ that, were the object of a rejected lover’s affections to fall in love with another, the scorned lovers would wish the beloved to be “merciful”, so that he be spared their pain. This is an extreme version of a simpler picture of sympathy, one that Shakespeare explores both aesthetically and narratively, in the related case of women’s mourning. Yet, after Shakespeare’s tentative character study with Julia and Silvia, who show remarkable compassion and solidarity, the plays seldom, if ever, present this version of lovers’ sympathy as a valid possibility on the stage. The innocent harmony of Lucrece’s maid weeping with her mistress never recovers from the intrusion of the maxim on female impressionability and transparency. The maid weeps in pure sympathy, not knowing the cause for her mistress’ distress. Lucrece withdraws, appalled by her maid’s “poor counterfeit of her complaining” (1271) and will take neither comfort nor counsel. The gentlemen on Navarre bond happily together, but in much the same spirit as they banded together against love.

3. Sympathy in Love

... In composing, the orator should even, as much as possible, be an actor; for, by natural sympathy, they are most persuasive and affecting who are under the influence of actual passion...

Aristotle - *Poetics*

*You are not young; no more am I. Go to,
then, there's sympathy. You are merry; so am I. Ha,
ha, then, there's more sympathy. You love sack, and
so do I. Would you desire better sympathy? Let it suffice
thee, Mistress Page, at the least if the love of soldier
can suffice, that I love thee. I will not say "pity me"—
'tis not a soldier-like phrase—but I say "love me".*

John Falstaff – *The Merry Wives of Windsor*

Sympathy, in its early modern sense (as likeness) is key in Renaissance discourses of affect, courtship and of representation/persuasion. My comments on *A Lover's Complaint* suggest the power that eliciting 'sympathy' may be imagined to hold and have also shown how sympathy might be, most powerfully, physical and imitative. But we can carry this idea too far. For the Renaissance lover, practical problems are involved in educing sympathy in love. The lover may petition for sympathy in something more like our modern sense; if this does not assign blame, it demands a kind of recognition that involves the beloved in the lover's anguish. More likely, the lover will angle for "pity", in its potent older sense, a sense with greater currency for an Elizabethan audience.

In our modern use, which has almost entirely replaced the older sense, to pity someone is something of a false transitive, meaning really to have pity for them - and to have pity is to *feel for* someone, to *feel* pity. This is evident in the *Oxford Concise Dictionary*, which lists for pity only⁹⁸: "the feeling of sorrow and compassion caused by the suffering of others" and the verb:

⁹⁸ Besides pity (noun): "cause for regret or disappointment" (as in 'what a pity'), a sense irrelevant to my distinction.

“feel pity for”. In its more political, Elizabethan usage (a truer transitive), ‘to pity’ was to apply pity to, not feel pity for. This involved showing pity, not simply ‘having’ it. Pity did not denote something passively and inwardly experienced by the pitier, but something to be actively granted to the pitied. Unusually, *Twelfth Night* shows both. When Olivia, having exposed herself by sending a token after Cesario, demands to be answered, Viola responds with the enigmatic mixture of restraint and openness that marks her singular narrative of patience on a monument, in a phrase that could contain either sincerity or dissimulation, a terse blankness or an appalling tenderness:

Viola I pity you. (3.1.114)

Olivia’s response shows the lover’s characteristic eagerness in love, and also the lover’s typical eagerness to enter into witty disputation, but Viola’s response, while similarly quick and witty, has a markedly different effect:

Olivia That’s a degree to love.

Viola No, not a grece, for ’tis a vulgar proof
That very oft we pity enemies. (115-7)

When Viola pities, she does so in an unusually modern sense. Olivia may still hope for more, for a pity that involves *showing* pity, mercy, even aiding the impotent suppliant, not simply *feeling* sympathetic, pointing to an inner state which is of no great help to the practical Petrarchan lover. She will ‘have’ pity, when Olivia implicitly requires her to take/grant it. Viola’s ‘sympathy’ (as we might understand it) has little of the Renaissance sense of correspondence or matching. Viola insists precisely that she does not respond with like feeling. The gaping absence in this ‘pity’ is more than the absence of love (‘Look, Olivia - let’s just be friends’): Viola’s ‘pity’ has no performative in it. Pity is here quite clearly not a way to love, where love involves political manoeuvres.⁹⁹ Viola’s parting words to Olivia on their first meeting have become a curse.

Love make his heart of flint that you shall love,
And let your fervour, like my master’s, be
Placed in contempt. ... (TN1.5.256-8)

⁹⁹ “Degree” calls to mind rank, as Olivia finds herself humbled by a ‘boy’, and tries to re-establish hierarchy, but Viola denies her even the promise of a ladder to climb to favour.

approvingly or no.¹⁰⁰ In a second option, the lover may eschew blaming the beloved and blame love as an externalised force or third player. This appears to be used to just as disappointing, or dubious, ends. The fickle lover frequently plays with the paradox of love's changeability (more honestly, the lover's change), as in Proteus' convenient complaint "Love bade me swear and love bids me forswear..." (TGV 2.6.6) The dramatic presence of lamenting women lovers in early modern representation afforded important, if constrained, space for expression.¹⁰¹ This feminine trope frequently has a cause – and, one might even say, a masculine counterpart – in the lovers' dilemma of forswearing. When not mourning their powerlessness before an icy beloved, dapper lovers may bewail their powerlessness to love against the will of 'Love' as a third party, a deity which may finally be invoked to take power away from the beloved. When a new love object is found, to avoid forswearing love, the lover must forswear the (once) beloved. Small wonder women in Shakespeare plead caution, and show often exaggerated restraint, in vow-making.

As waggish boys in game themselves forswear,
So the boy Love is perjured everywhere. (MND1.1240-1)

The counter to both models of blame is found in the very different argument of a single flesh, which admits of no lover and beloved (though flesh may still be gendered). Here, the wrong the lover does forces itself upon, or infects, his counterpart; it is a case not of what 'love' makes the lover do, but of what acts of love visit upon the shared flesh. Adriana complains to the man she takes for her husband:

... if we two be one, and thou play false,
I do digest the poison of thy flesh,
Being strumpeted by thy contagion. (Com 2.2.142-4)

Adriana's strategy is significant for the argument that, in the Renaissance, the masculine was effectively spiritualised (in contrast to our post-Victorian notion of the spiritual feminine), while

¹⁰⁰ This technique is used to most devastating effect in Richard's aggressive wooing of Anne, where she is given full responsibility for Richard's murder – and proposed self-murder. See esp Oestrich Hart, 'Since I cannot prove a lover'

¹⁰¹ The feminine gendering of the 'complainte', where grief is both effeminised, aestheticised, gendered and 'genred', has attracted recent critical interest.

the feminine was associated with the flesh.¹⁰² Here Antonia eagerly appropriates the corporeality, rather than the spiritualised sense, of the single flesh, to imagine visiting its contamination on her distant husband.¹⁰³

Julia employs a related logic of partnership, or rather oneness, when she shames Proteus. As she presents it, their shame is linked. But the state of her body does not, as it does for Adriana, evidence the contamination of his (and her) body. It reflects Proteus' change of mind. Where Julia might well claim that love, if not Proteus, drove her to seek out her lover in men's attire, we see her choosing to make a slightly different case

O Proteus, let this habit make thee blush.
Be thou ashamed that I have took upon me
Such an immodest raiment, if shame live
In a disguise of love.
It is the lesser blot, modesty finds,
Women to change their shapes than men their minds. (TGV5.4.102-7)

This final scene opens with Valentine's comment: "How use doth breed a habit in a man!" (5.4.1) But Julia suggests that use also breeds habit in a woman (ill) used by a man. In this scene, Julia's strongest moment is to assign scandal, the shame of her disguise, to shame at Proteus' change; in this way any shame that might be found in her disguise is deftly transferred to him as its cause. Julia's approach here is interesting for its special, theatrical awareness of modesty: she complains essentially that her bold habit, while unbecoming a lady, is perfectly fitting the part she must play as Proteus' counterpart.¹⁰⁴ Here, with 'her' disguised body, Julia at once shames Proteus and excuses her own boldness. The dishonour invoked by his "disguise of love" points most accusingly, not to Proteus' treatment of Julia, but to his recent betrayal of Valentine, to whom he professed perfect friendship (and to a lesser extent Silvia, to whom he pledged his love). More obviously, of course, it underscores Julia's appearance and, in its connotation with intoxication,

¹⁰² See Rackin, 'Foreign Country'.

¹⁰³ I discuss Adriana's complaint in greater detail later in this chapter.

¹⁰⁴ See my discussion of Julia's theatricality below in 'Love Divided'. Julia's disguise has allowed her little more than to be mutely present at Proteus' most appalling moment, his assault on Silvia. As Proteus' disguised betrothed, she can do nothing but watch passively, finally fainting away to be unmasked (rather clumsily) with the ring that marks her as Proteus' former love. After Julia, Shakespeare's cross-dressing heroines are generally spared such banal discovery, and - it would seem - the need to explain themselves as regards the probity of their choice to dress as boys.

“disguise of love” (drunkenness of love) may suggest a simpler judgement of Proteus’ ‘love-sick’ metamorphosis. Though Proteus’s ‘disguise of love’ must point to her own, when called to account, Julia does not claim that *love* drove her to dress as a man; she points the finger squarely at Proteus. Proteus bears the shame for Julia’s monstrous disguise, because it mirrors and manifests his own monstrous (feminine) inconstancy. Julia shares Proteus’ inconstancy, manifested in her body. She *is* culpable for her transgression, but he more so.

As Adriana appropriates the discourse of female contamination, so Julia appropriates that of female impressionability in love. The power of notions of imitation and contamination will be discussed and developed later. But first it will be useful to consider the other side of love’s bonds melted: oneness in love. Julia assumes an indisputable oneness with Proteus, the oneness that is supposed to join a pair of lovers, which is pitted in the play against a different unity – that between friends. When Shakespeare was using them, the terms friend and lover were practically interchangeable, pointing to the major tension at the centre of *Two Gentlemen’s* divided loyalties, one that persists unresolved in later plays.

TRUE LOVE

1. Love divided

man and wife is one flesh

- Hamlet

*"If a man urged me to tell him wherefore I loved him, I feel it cannot be expressed,
but by answering; Because it was he, because it was my selfe"*

- Montaigne 'On Friendship' (1603 trans)

The supreme expression of love in ~~the~~ *Nicomachean Ethics* bonding self to other as an other self – resonated, in the early modern period, with the Christian vision of man and wife as "one flesh". But the integration of these superficially equivalent ideas proves problematic. 'One flesh' does not equal the beloved as (other) self, and vice versa¹⁰⁵. Of course, the Renaissance had its own vocabularies for reading both its own theories and those of the ancients. In the period, 'self' conveyed something quite far from the concept of unique identity familiar to us; self would indicate often soul, sometimes body, most often both.¹⁰⁶ Thus, even though he distinguishes between marriage and (male) friendship, Montaigne's translation is already implicated in the language of physical and spiritual marriage pursued by the early modern church, in which flesh and spirit are significantly wedded (the church to god; wife to husband). But the quasi-religious paradox of the one flesh position, with its Ovidian overtones, popularised in the early modern period, remains distinct from Aristotle's socio-ethical ideal, particularly as our sense of "self" would understand it. This is both for reasons of differentiated gender status¹⁰⁷ and fundamental differences in the concepts.

Sharing flesh (however spiritualised) and sharing a self (however physically close) are different, and seem to find expression in Shakespeare only in the fantasy of 'The Phoenix and the Turtle', and perhaps in a view of romantic tragedy that can read Romeo and Juliet as fully spiritualised

¹⁰⁵ See Ferry on the litany of marriage, the oneness of body and soul, the oneness of man and wife (*Inward Language*.39)

¹⁰⁶ Ferry, *Inward Language*. 39

¹⁰⁷ Aristotle even prescribes the necessary aristocracy between man and wife in Book X

and united in death. Irving Singer reads *Romeo and Juliet* “more as a condemnation of society than as a revelation of love triumphant in the next world” and finds in the play no suggestion “that these lovers will find each other on the other side of death”¹⁰⁸. For Shakespeare’s modern audience, the popular notion that the lovers transcend, and are joined and consummated in, death seems to precede the play itself. It is an impression made easier to support with filmic techniques perhaps exemplified in Baz Luhrman’s popular ‘postmodern’ film version, in which a lush montage sequence is able to fill, prolong, and essentially rewrite, *Romeo and Juliet*’s death (pictured finally as an embrace in sleep) with dreamlike, dancing images of their whirlwind romance. The montage reproduces the story’s contemporary mythology and the popular romantic reading (and meta-reading) of the play as a story of “everlasting love”, by picturing the lovers freed and united in death.¹⁰⁹ But the play’s events carefully conspire to see to it that both *Romeo* and *Juliet* experience the horror of dying alone - doubly alone in a world in which the other is not only absent, but dead.¹¹⁰ Only the mythical Phoenix and the Turtle die together, consummated in death. Shakespeare does not allow this for his human tragic lovers.

Shakespeare’s characters frequently express deep angst and frustration at the impossibility of perfect union in either death or life, the perfect union that was then prescribed by the Anglican church.¹¹¹ Janet Adelman has drawn our attention to the manifold manifestations, in Shakespeare’s (mature) plays, of a horror of union and of sexual congress that repels and threatens masculinity, evidencing deep anxieties about the loss of self, as well as the horror of contamination, which is associated with the grotesque physicality of women.¹¹² We see these frustrations and fears rehearsed *The Comedy of Errors*, a play both fascinated and troubled with the idea of twinned flesh, in *Adriana*’s lament.

How comes it now, my husband, O how comes it
That thou art then estrangèd from thyself?—
Thy “self” I call it, being strange to me

¹⁰⁸ Singer, Irving. *The Pursuit of Love*. (Baltimore: John Hopkins, 1994) 221

¹⁰⁹ Luhrman includes the gritty, tawdry reality of the aftermath. But its distance and irony seem, if anything, to reinforce the emotional power of the montage, showing what it is *Romeo and Juliet* have transcended.

¹¹⁰ effectively for *Romeo*, factually for *Juliet*, who has already once surrendered her life breath alone, entirely cut off from *Romeo* while she prepares to enter her deathlike sleep.

¹¹¹ See ‘An Homilie of the State of Marriage’

¹¹² See esp. Janet Adelman on *Troilus and Cressida*. in *Suffocating Mothers: fantasies of maternal origin in Shakespeare’s plays, Hamlet to the Tempest* (New York: Routledge, 1992)
On the gendering of the physical/spiritual distinction in the period, see Rackin, ‘Foreign Country’.

That, undividable, incorporate,
Am better than thy dear self's better part. (2.2.119-23)

Estranged from her husband, Adriana's impassioned plea both cites the authority of the "single flesh" and manipulates it.¹¹³ Her concern is not just estrangement from her husband, but also the threat of infidelity. Adriana continues her conventional tirade on her own "unjust divorce" (Com 1.1.104), using the play's pervasive imagery of solution and dissolution in water, to conclude rather unexpectedly, that Antipholus makes himself a cuckold by making his wife a strumpet, forced to "digest the poison" of his flesh, and he hers.¹¹⁴ We see her using the very fear of contamination in a single/shared flesh that Adelman describes. Adriana ingeniously uses this discourse of contamination to condemn and petition (the man she takes for) her husband, without real success, but to great rhetorical effect. She makes a passionate case, but she is in fact (unknown to her) not "one flesh" with Antipholus of Syracuse, to whom she addresses her harangue, except as he is "one flesh" with his lost twin. The rules of married single flesh presumably do not apply, though, were he her husband - which she laments he is not - they *should*. The problems of reconciling body and spirit in the ideal of perfect unity, might be partially challenged in the ideal of 'companionate marriage' described as a "perpetuall friendship"¹¹⁵, where man and wife seem less totally subsumed in union, but actively share lives. But this seems to be extremely rare and, in Shakespeare, it seems to be marked most often where it is perceived lacking.¹¹⁶

Wooing is, of course, a very different game from wedding. A self-absorbed Petrarchism may make use of the idea of an other self, without either the complications of shared flesh or the bonds of friendship and duty implied in the *Ethics*. Antipholus shamelessly applies Adriana's rhetoric when he denies Adriana, proposing to Luciana.

¹¹³ For a discussion of the "one flesh" see Thomas P. Hennings 'The Anglican Doctrine of the Affectionate Marriage in *The Comedy of Errors*' MLQ 1986, 47(2) pp91-107. Hennings carries out an interesting and sustained reading of the play in the context of the influential 'Homilie of the state of matrimony', though his conclusion that Adriana's tirade is "entirely orthodox" seems to take the sting (and the interest) out of her rather aggressive appropriation of the discourse of the body, which is evidently not reducible to a simple plea from Adriana not to expose her to venereal disease.

¹¹⁴ For if we two be one, and thou play false,
I do digest the poison of thy flesh,
Being strumpeted by thy contagion.
Keep then fair league and truce with thy true bed,
I live unstained, thou undishonoured. (142-6)

¹¹⁵ 'An Homilie of the State of Matrimony' quoted in Hennings, 'Affectionate Marriage'. 96

It is thyself, mine own self's better part,
Mine eye's clear eye, my dear heart's dearer heart (3.2.61)

And Valentine sounds much like the 'former Antipholus' Adriana appeals to - for whom no meat could be sweet, unless she carved it¹¹⁷ - waxing lyrical about Silvia:

What light is light, if Silvia be not seen?
What joy is joy, if Silvia be not by — (TGV 3.1.174-5)¹¹⁸

The actor is never sanctioned as fully one with either his romantic counterpart or his own role. Staging love, the foregrounded, sexually ambivalent boy actor may thus have metatheatrical effects beyond the obviously erotic, imparting also a sense of poignancy, a reflection on youth, flesh, identity and desire. Such moments are found in Julia/Sebastian's Ariadne speech and Viola/Cesario's tragic tale of 'patience on a monument'. We lose, both in film and in contemporary performance, certain intended or assumed effects of the plays in early modern performance, effects such as that of the boy actor. But we gain others. The gaze of the camera may bring in another dimension, allowing an audience to share an alien gaze, as when the camera puts the spectator in the place of the lover/beloved, the perfect place from which to observe love. Film plays a very special and subtle - I will venture to say theatrical - trick in *Shakespeare in Love* when we watch Viola, the answer to Will's problem, the "image of perfection", framed in close up, mouthing these, Valentine's lines from the *Two Gentlemen*: lines she will later perform in her audition.

¹¹⁶ Brutus' Portia bravely petitions her husband to share his thoughts with her, as he has done before. Her dark shadow self is found in Lady Macbeth, who shares her husband's villainy.

¹¹⁷ The time was once when thou unurged wouldst vow
That never words were music to thine ear,
That never object pleasing in thine eye,
That never touch well welcome to thy hand,
That never meat sweet-savoured in thy taste,
Unless I spake, or looked, or touched, or carved to thee (Com 2.2.113-8)

¹¹⁸ He goes on:
Except I be by Silvia in the night
There is no music in the nightingale.
Unless I look on Silvia in the day
There is no day for me to look upon. (8-11)

Before she is Shakespeare's perfect actor - first his Romeo, then (perfected) his Juliet - Viola is Will's ideal audience. As model spectator, at court, she is presented as profoundly receptive. Her physical response to the play (leaning forwards, eyes widened, lips parted) proclaims a responsiveness that may register, in Shakespeare's time or in our own, as sexual receptivity. This resonates with Callaghan's study of the (largely male) constructions/projections of female spectatorship in the period.¹¹⁹ But Viola is far removed from the Renaissance stereotype of the uneducated woman who attends the theatre for a specifically visual pleasure¹²⁰ - though her presentation agrees with other antitheatricalist emphases, notably the wanton display associated with elaborately dressed women attending the public playhouse.¹²¹ Far from attending to enjoy physical display ("Proteus, for looks"), when she enters the galleries, Viola, in her exquisite wedding gown, provides it.¹²² At the earlier, court performance of *Two Gentlemen*, we see Viola framed in close up. As her lips part around the actor's words, her eyes seem to glaze rather than gaze - on display. When Viola mouths Valentine's words, commending what (in the feminine company of lusty Rosaline, the matronly nurse, and an aging, painted queen) can only speak of her own beauty, the interaction between image and sound at the heart of the filmic medium gives us both desire and its fulfilment, in a play on presence and absence. When (after a sorry procession of Marlowes), we later hear Viola's disembodied voice speaking these lines in rehearsal we will no doubt remember "the face..."

To fit them to the occasion - and to Viola's tender, intimate, delivery - Valentine's lines are on both occasions selectively presented, stripped of their drama and reduced to (pretty) poetry.

Valentine And why not death, rather than living torment?
 To die is to be banished from myself,
 And Silvia is my self. Banished from her
 Is self from self, a deadly banishment.

...

¹¹⁹ "The exaggerated aesthetic effects of theatrical representation become visible as affect in the figure of the overwrought gentlewoman." Callaghan, Dymna. *Shakespeare Without Women: Representing gender and race on the Renaissance Stage*. (London: Routledge, 2000) 141

¹²⁰ Callaghan, *Shakespeare Without Women*. 160

¹²¹ see Dawson, *Culture of Playgoing*. 88-107, esp91 and Yachnin. 120-121 (quoting Philip Gosson and Henry Parrot).

¹²² The audience are filmed remarkably (and conveniently) inattentive to Viola's presence in the gallery. But exhibitionism was enjoyed in the playhouse both by the fine ladies attending and by the gawping crowds, where the audience was just another of the theatre's pleasures. (see Callaghan, *Shakespeare Without Women*)

She is my essence, and I leave to be
If I be not by her fair influence
Fostered, illumined, cherished, kept alive. (170-3, 182-4)

The moment of poetic speech the film chooses to quote is embedded in a passage that avows a perfect closeness, a complete union that seems to aspire to that of the immortal Phoenix and the Turtle, while developing a keen sense of mortality and the potential for loss. Mutual death seems to be systematically denied Shakespeare's characters, and Valentine speaks feelingly of the potential for self-loss when perfect self-effacing union is (~~seen~~ to have been) achieved. But *Shakespeare in Love*'s facile quotation makes Valentine's speech more secure than his situation occasions, allowing it to exhibit rhetorical praise, not personal anxiety.

Spoken in solitude, this soliloquy expresses intense private emotion. Of course, it is spoken on stage to an audience. Spoken in front of witnesses, it might mobilise blame, or at least heavy responsibility for Valentine's whole being. If Valentine may "leave to be" without Silvia, what else may he leave? The way that Valentine casually abandons Silvia at the play's climax is not entirely incommensurate with his attitude here.

And Silvia is my self. Banished from her
Is self from self, a deadly banishment. (172-3)

Valentine's anxiety of banishment allows a strange variation on a Petrarchan theme, combined with the Aristotelian notion of the friend as other self: one in which the "other self" argument explains not love, but the demand for love. Valentine does not *love Julia* because she is his other self; he must be loved *by her* because she is his other self— or be banished from himself, his own (better) nature. In somewhat different circumstances, we witness Proteus' palpable sense of the threat of internal dissociation, when he resolves to betray both Julia and Valentine by leaving Julia and wooing Silvia:

To leave my Julia shall I be forsworn;
To love fair Silvia shall I be forsworn;
To wrong my friend I shall be much forsworn.
And e'en that power which gave me first my oath
Provokes me to this threefold perjury.

Love bade me swear, and love bids me forswear.
O sweet-suggesting love, if thou hast sinned
Teach me, thy tempted subject, to excuse it. (TGV.2..1-8)

His “threefold perjury” - “Love bade me swear, and love bids me forswear” (2.6.6) - leads Proteus to consider exactly what/who he forswears and loses. Deified and set aside as a divine scapegoat, “Love” can be excluded from this bizarre and rather crude emotional arithmetic.

I cannot leave to love, and yet I do.
But there I leave to love where I should love.
Julia I lose, and Valentine I lose.
If I keep them I needs must lose myself.
If I lose them, thus find I by their loss
For Valentine, myself, for Julia, Silvia.
I to myself am dearer than a friend,
For love is still most precious in itself, (17-24)

Valentine and Julia and their desires are first pitted (together) against Proteus’s desire, which is for Silvia (joined with Proteus); hence Valentine and Julia vs. Proteus and Silvia. But the last three lines of his meditation, positing what he gains by betraying them, separate the men from the women, setting love against love, friend against friend. “For Valentine, myself, for Julia, Silvia.” The sacrifice of Julia for Silvia is finally secondary to the battle, always present, between love for Valentine and self-love. Harmony is only partly restored at the play’s end, where Valentine treats Proteus as his self and gives him Silvia. While Valentine is seen, in soliloquy, echoing Aristotle’s ethics of male friendship (“Silvia is my self... self from self”), Proteus emphatically disavows this doctrine, concluding: “I to myself am dearer than a friend/ For love is still most precious in itself” (23) ‘Love still most precious in itself’ becomes ‘love most precious in Proteus himself’. At this point, Proteus seems to have all but forgotten love as a third (or fifth) party, “Love” being the figure he originally petitions. Then, after almost two dozen lines of villainy, he bizarrely appends Love as his sponsor deity:

Love, lend me wings to make my purpose swift,
As thou hast lent me wit to plot this drift. (42-3)

Love is identified, not with the frustrating beloved, but with the self, or as an extension of Proteus' will. His will serves love (naturally) as love serves his will. Proteus invokes the god of love only as an accomplice, or a familiar. Yet he began by casting all blame onto love that bade him swear and bids him forswear. We will return later to the politics of blaming Love and of blaming the beloved, to both of which Proteus will have recourse. Valentine and Proteus make for an interesting contrast in their treatment of the ~~Nicomachean~~ code and its incorporation into the politics of wooing. But, as a general rule, the idea of the self split in love seems to be less interesting in the hands of men - commonly offering variations on the Petrarchan pattern, or tedious monologues that set themselves up for disavowal.¹²³ The idea of the self split finds more interesting and unpredictable expression in the words of women who feel, and describe themselves, divided in love. Two telling examples are found in the two plays that serve to define *Shakespeare in Love: The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, the example of early emotional inadequacy quoted in the film, and *Twelfth Night*, which it anticipates. In these plays, we note parallel instances where, at their most constrained moments, Shakespeare's beguiling comic heroines are able indirectly to woo the audience. Constructing themselves (their former identities) as fictions, they employ the highly affective technique of theatricalising the self.

Julia, as Sebastian, tells a story of Julia's abandonment that moves Silvia to tears. Were Silvia to say, as Orsino does in *Twelfth Night*, "what does thou know [boy]?" this would never be possible. Orsino is obsessed with physical difference, and with how he is to define himself away from the weakly receiving impressionability of feminised love. Viola, as Cesario, confronted with Orsino's dismissal of female love speaks for herself and her woman's love, as she fascinates and moves Orsino with a story of female constancy. "In faith", she tells him, "they are as true of heart as we" (2.4.105)

¹²³ Looking at Proteus's example, we may be happy that Romeo, having forsworn Rosaline, never indulges in similar qualms.

2. Love transcended

There is a relentless, hypnotic quality to Orsino's diatribe against women's weakness. This is, of course, offset by Viola's presence. But before he even begins, Orsino is undermined and emasculated: his homily on retention and constancy as a quintessentially masculine virtue follows Feste's lively abuse of the Duke (and the melancholy god, cupid) as inconstant, in a passage that reminds us of *Two Gentlemen*:

Now the melancholy god protect thee, and the tailor
make thy doublet of changeable taffeta, for thy mind is a very
opal. I would have men of such constancy put to sea, that their
business might be everything, and their intent everywhere, for
that's it that always makes a good voyage of nothing. Farewell. (TN2.4.72-6)

In his speech, Orsino attempts to distance his profound love from that of women, and ends aligning himself with the opal sea. In the beginning of this chapter, I discussed how early modern love is associated with (feminine) impressionability. The discourse of amorous impression is occasionally suitably modified for men. In *Love's Labours Lost*, Navarre's lover's heart is "impressed" "like an agate" (2.1.234) engraved or embossed with, rather than moulded to, the image of the Princess. Even in mockery, Boyet remains diplomatic, downplaying the Prince's femininity with a customised masculine vocabulary. In *Twelfth Night*, we see the Duke Orsino returning obsessively to physical difference, as he struggles similarly to cast his love (and loving body) in appropriately powerful, masculine terms. Orsino is wilfully deluded and Boyet a flatterer. Love is understood to be feminising. In the model of female impressionability, Proteus' inconstancy in love remains - despite his final condemnation of specifically masculine inconstancy - gendered feminine. His waxen (feminine) love was always doomed to inconstancy.

Julia It is the lesser blot, modesty finds,
 Women to change their shapes than men their minds.
Proteus Than men their minds! 'Tis true. O heaven, were man
 But constant, he were perfect. That one error
 Fills him with faults, makes him run through all th' sins;
 Inconstancy falls off ere it begins.
 What is in Silvia's face but I may spy

More fresh in Julia's, with a constant eye? (TGV5.4.106-13)

Proteus' response to Julia's charge is characteristically eager and unreasoned, falling over to make himself a penitent exemplum and then pair the delight of freshness, somewhat uncomfortably, with the charge of constancy.¹²⁴ Proteus will, like Orsino, look to restore virtue to his own masculine body. Remarkably, confronted with the sight of his faithful beloved, rather than recognising constancy in Julia, Proteus- sees constancy restored to his own eyes! He looks here to men's perfection. Were man but constant, he were perfect. Were woman constant, that were neither here nor there.

Shakespeare in Love is entirely unconcerned with love that is 'true' in perhaps its most Shakespearean sense. In Shakespeare we see love proved through endurance, particularly through women's constancy. Against expectations, Shakespeare's Julia, Silvia, Hermia, Helena, Viola and Juliet are all true, constant in love. Singer's observation gets to the core of the discrepancy between Shakespearean love and its popular appropriations: "In Shakespeare, "...love does not transcend time, it endures it."¹²⁵ The film prefers a heroine and hero who do not have to endure time to prove their love. In its ending, *Shakespeare in Love* struggles with biography, but also with its need to show love transcendent - which, in the *Romeo and Juliet* fantasy of undying love, is love triumphant. The film's aesthetic, and its definition, of love privileges transcendence. To do away with constancy and establish love's transcendence (and Will's future), the film ships its heroine to the colonies and turns her into Will's muse. Removed, it seems forever, Will's Viola is finally reduced/elevated to an ideal, the ideal on which love's transcendence depends. Better that, it seems, than patience on a monument. Setting up Will's transcendent love, a love he can use to further himself, the film is aligned less with Viola than with Orsino.

¹²⁴ "Fresh" in its obvious sense makes flattering reference to Julia's blooming youth, but it may also act as an adverb, suggesting that Proteus' eye has been refreshed and renewed by the experience of his inconstancy, the model of love given a riotous test run in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

¹²⁵ Singer, *Nature of Love*.

3. Consuming-all love

The eligible Orsino zealously affects and endorses the role of lover. Seeking a noblewoman's love from his own position of considerable rank and fortune, he is in a strangely vulnerable position. Orsino wishes to incorporate a wife and aggrandize himself. In this, he must avoid a contamination that will lessen him; he must also find an outlet for his poisonous melancholy. Bacon, in his essays, addressed to an educated male audience, imagined capable of useful, morally informed, self-fashioning and the restraint necessary to it, would no doubt caution against Orsino's excess as a lover. But Orsino's drive to fashion himself as a lover is understandable. Michael Schoenfeldt constructs a picture of the Renaissance body fastidiously constructing and maintaining itself through consumption, exclusion and expulsion of "humours", forms of internal self fashioning.¹²⁶ These humours were incontestably bodily, but would also include emotions, "passions", which could be treated as humours. Love would be just such a passion – and also a means to radical self-fashioning.¹²⁷ Bacon's essays 'Of Love' and 'Of Friendship' speak quite directly to Schoenfeldt's self fashioning. The first suggests love as a passion with the potential, even a propensity for, debilitating excess. Friendship is spared denigration, described not as passion or humour, but more as a physician,¹²⁸ allowing for the purging and refining of these and other passions.¹²⁹ The Renaissance man might regulate and fashion his body through a corporeal arithmetic of ingestion and expulsion, and Orsino seems to draw from this vision. Faced with the problem of reconciling his Petrarchan role as courtly lover to the more seemly Baconian ideal, Orsino struggles to imagine an appropriately noble, masculine love. This struggle inspires a bizarre diatribe against 'women's' love.

In the Renaissance discourse of love, we see an ongoing debate between the mercurial, independent superficiality of the eye and the more integrated, sovereign heart, administrator of

¹²⁶ Schoenfeldt, *Bodies and Selves*.

¹²⁷ Notoriously transformative, love, entering the body, was imagined to effect radical metamorphoses of body and mind. In a different vein, love might also allow the lover to play a different *role*. Love is then not a metaphor for political manoeuvrings, it *is*, consciously used, a politic manoeuvre. The body is not the dwelling place of love so much as the tool with which love is performed and generated.

¹²⁸ See Bacon's essay 'Of Regimen of Health' It is interesting to compare the advice Bacon gives here for finding a physician with that for choosing friends and advisors.

¹²⁹ "diseases of Stoppings, and Suffocations, are the most dangerous in the body; And it is not much otherwise in the Minde," writes Bacon. For the relief of all the other organs, understood here explicitly as part of the mind, an appropriate curative may be physically ingested, and Bacon goes on to enumerate the elements to give relief to each organ. "[B]ut no Receipt openeth the Heart, but a tried Friend; To whom you may impart Griefs, Joys, Fears, Hopes, Suspensions, Counsels, and whatsoever lieth upon the Heart to

the body and its passions. A parallel (and similarly gendered) relationship is also set up between palate and stomach, or appetite and digestion. Lust is generally associated with whims of taste or with base appetite, as seen in Orsino's discourse on the inferiority of a woman's love held up against his own. Constructing his (ideal) lover's constitution with the three "principle" or "noble" organs,¹³⁰ Orsino moves confidently from the superior power of the male heart to his valorous Elizabethan liver and stomach.¹³¹ Against the leaky female body¹³², he holds up his own vigorous person and capacity:

Orsino There is no woman's sides
 Can bide the beating of so strong a passion
 As love doth give my heart; no woman's heart
 So big, to hold so much. They lack retention.
 Alas, their love may be called appetite,
 No motion of the liver, but the palate,
 That suffer surfeit, cloyment, and revolt.
 But mine is all as hungry as the sea,
 And can digest as much. Make no compare
 Between that love a woman can bear me
 And that I owe Olivia. (TN2.4.91-101)

In the period, while many organs remained mysterious, the question of the stomach's capacity had been resolved by anatomists.¹³³ Witness one of Donne's sermons of 1620, speaking of the unknown capacity of the 'covetous mind': "We know the receipt the capacity of the Ventricle, the stomach of man, how much it can hold..." but Donne moves from this into areas of uncertainty: "... when I look into the furnaces of our spirits, the ventricles of the heart and of the braine, they are not thimbles."¹³⁴ Orsino's speech evidences, and draws on, a peculiarly early

oppress it..." Bacon, Francis. *The Essayes or Counsels, Civill and Morall*. Edited by Michael Kiernan. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985) 81

¹³⁰ The Galenic/Vesalian model, see Sawday, Jonathan. *The Body Emblazoned: dissection and the human body in Renaissance Culture* (London: Routledge, 1995) 130

¹³¹ The stomach is identified with valour as well as inclination. "Why, if you have a stomach, to 't, monsieur..." (AWIII.vi.58/64), "If you dare fight today, come to the field/ If not, when you have the stomachs." (JC 5.1, 65-6)

¹³² See esp. Paster, Gail Kern. *The Body Embarrassed: Drama and the Disciplines of Shame in Early Modern England*. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993)

¹³³ Sawday, *Body Emblazoned*. 18

¹³⁴ Sawday, *Body Emblazoned*. 19 and Hillman, 'Visceral Knowledge' 97

modern sense of the body/self as both knowable and boundless. But Orsino is determined to distinguish his superior male knowledge. For women “lack retention”.

Orsino circles passion, fortitude, and constancy, centring on “retention”, which will distinguish his digestion in love. His attention to retention does not see a move away from the body, but rather a reentry into the discourse of anatomy and physical difference. His is a strange fantasy, full of contradictions, and one that promotes separateness from the love object, as well as from women in general. Orsino is not imagining entering into any service of love - the attentive, retentive love of sonnet 122 that faithfully preserves the beloved’s image. Using here a word uncommon in Shakespeare’s corpus, Orsino is later a pale comparison to an impassioned Antonio who gave life and more to Sebastian, who selflessly *discards* all “retention”, reminding his audience:

His life I gave him, and did thereto add
My love without retention or restraint,
All his in dedication. For his sake... (TN5.175-7)

Self-loving Orsino strongly endorses a retention that distinguishes between taste and digestion. His fanciful expansion on the stomach’s physical and metaphorical capacity takes digestion somewhat beyond its conventional (gendered) reference to endurance. Appropriately, ‘digestion’ is a peculiarly gendered term, both as a synonym for comprehension and its more bodily denotation. It is used only once in Shakespeare to refer to a woman - and then by a woman: Adriana, who uses it of herself when she appropriates the discourse of feminine contamination to chastise the man she takes for her husband for forcing her to “digest” the poison of his adulterous flesh. (Com2.2.147). Elsewhere women are not associated with its application. Carnal women are not imagined capable of higher “digestion”, the knowledge of self and world that self-regarding Orsino so regards in himself.

Orsino, unlike Adriana, refuses digestion as inviting, or allowing, contagion. Indeed, as has been commonly noted, his fantasy seems to privilege a relationship with love, rather than the beloved – offering the rather easy conclusion that Orsino is in love with love. Orsino need not worry that digestion might sour, a concern for so many characters.¹³⁵ He seems happy to digest before, or

¹³⁵ “Things sweet to taste prove in digestion sour.” RicIII, 229 “His taste delicious, in digestion souring, / Devours his will that lived by foul devouring. Luc. (699-700)

without, tasting. Perhaps this is how he will skirt the problem of love's "monstrosity"¹³⁶, the distance between desire and execution, ideal and performance.¹³⁷ For him, the ideal lover can both take in and *consume* love - the love that might otherwise enter and consume him. Moving from the beating heart to the churning, oceanic stomach, Orsino's virtue of retention allows one not only to hold love, but to digest it, suggesting a capacity that depends on in-corporating and ridding oneself of the alien, of love.

For all his self-identification in the hungry sea, Orsino suggests a notion of love and retention that involves both holding and holding back - a seemly Baconian base to his Petrarchan flights of fancy. Orsino seems to suggest, against Bacon, that he needs no friend to help him bear his passion, even while he confides in Viola/Cesario. Further he entrusts the business of wooing to this servant who has "studied" (1.5.158) his master's passion but (Orsino assumes) does not feel it. Or rather, does not feel it for *himself*. It is beyond the limits of this dissertation to explore the meanings and functions of love in service and of wooing by proxy. But the distinction will be useful to note. Note also how Orsino's notion of love - epitome of the self-involved, self-contained (self) love relationship that it is - still suggests love as something external that enters the body, and must be internally contained, not as something internally generated. Though Orsino's love defines him (as the melancholy aristocratic lover) to a significant degree, it gives no proof of an inner emotional authenticity.

Orsino associates women with carnal appetite. The platonic counter to the base appetite was the uppermost, reasoning soul. In *Twelfth Night*, Viola's reasoning *digestion* of the situation, her unique understanding, distinguishes her longing from Olivia's liking and also from Orsino's cannibalistic hunger. As they appear alongside each other in Wilson's *Arte of Rhetorique*, digestion (*digestio*) and retention (*retencia*) are rhetorical terms.¹³⁸ Viola is master of both. With her patience on a monument, Viola paints a far more enduring picture of retention that Orsino, particularly since it is a picture of pathos that only she and the audience can digest.

Appreciating this scene involves moving beyond Orsino's over-inflated corpus to Viola's response and her body, the fascinating, complex body that really compels the audience's

¹³⁶ This is the monstrosity in love, lady—that the will is infinite/ and the execution confined; that the desire is boundless/ and the act a slave to limit. (Tro3.2.69-71)

¹³⁷ See Schalkwyk, *Speech and Performance*. 171

¹³⁸ Wilson, *Arte of Rhetorique*. 395

attention. In response to Orsino's attack on woman's leaky love, Viola tells a story of tragic retention. Her precursor, Julia, gives much comic delight at a similar moment, with her remarkable talent for lucky slips of attention/retention: forgetting, or rather remembering, herself at key moments.¹³⁹ While Julia makes the error before Silvia of speaking as Julia, and must then cover for herself, Viola, avoiding such clumsiness (both for Orsino and the audience) carefully splits her orphan self, making herself all the sons and daughters of her father's house.

My father had a daughter loved a man
As it might be, perhaps, were I a woman
I should your lordship. (TN.2.4.106-8)

"Love doth make one pine", Bacon explains. But this does not seem to describe Viola's situation as seen here. Her story of patience on a monument takes the place, but not the form, of the common trope of abandonment. This is the picture of Julia painted in Julia's story:

She hath been fairer, madam, than she is.
When she did think my master loved her well
She, in my judgement, was as fair as you.
But since she did neglect her looking-glass,
And threw her sun-expelling mask away,
The air hath starved the roses in her cheeks
And pinched the lily tincture of her face,
That now she is become as black as I. (TGV 2.4.141-8)

Compare Viola's story:

She never told her love,
But let concealment, like a worm i' th' bud,
Feed on her damask cheek. She pined in thought,
And with a green and yellow melancholy

¹³⁹ Silvia ...Mine shall not do his Julia so much wrong.
 Julia She thanks you.
 Silvia What sayst thou?
 Julia I thank you, madam, that you tender her. (TGV 4.4.129-32)
Julia makes a parallel 'slip' with Proteus 4.4.69-73/7

She sat like patience on a monument,
Smiling at grief... (TN2.4.109-14)

Where Julia will, like the lamenting woman of 'A Lover's Complaint' physically embody a narrative of abandonment, abandoning herself to the harsh elements and to human scorn, Viola tells and shows a narrative of tragic retention that chokes on itself. Viola does not point only, knowingly, to her body, but to her discourse, and to the distance between show and tell.

4.

I am not I, pity the tale of me.

Sidney - *Astrophil and Stella*

The tragic tale of 'Cesario's sister' is reminiscent less of Bacon's rather slighting comments on love than of his treatment of friendship, specifically of the first fruits. For Bacon, the "principal function" of friendship is to ease a disorder both internal and bodily: friends unstop the heart which, like other organs, is prone to blockage and suffocation, offering "the Ease and Discharge of the Fulnesse and Swellings of the Heart, which passion of all kinds doe cause and induce."¹⁴⁰ Love is just such a passion. Bacon suggests that passions or extreme affections, if held in, and not shared with a friend, will finally canker their keeper, body and soul. At the same time, he argues that good, healthy human love is achieved by holding back passionate spontaneous love, refraining from bestowing it passionately on one subject, so that it may pass freely and "naturally" - spontaneously - to humanity.¹⁴¹ Viola is caught in the narrow space of Bacon's essay, where she will have her love be her friend, her friend her lover. In *Much Ado About Nothing*, Beatrice will (successfully) petition the word "friend" (4.1.265-300).¹⁴² But Cesario is separated from Orsino - not only by gender, but also by position of service; his/her narrative of alienation is an apposite response.

¹⁴⁰ Bacon, *Essayes*. 83

¹⁴¹ Bacon, *Essayes*. 33

¹⁴² Beatrice's argument was not a common one in the Renaissance, where the appeal (from a woman) to (essentially male) 'friendship' would invoke complex and contested obligations remote from the bland implications it enjoys today, though it can be traced all the way back to Sappho, the first to refuse a suitor with the formula "But be my friend" (Percival in *Aristotle on Friendship being an expanded translation of the Nicomachean Ethics Books VIII and IX* by Geoffrey Percival (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1940) .xx

Orsino But died thy sister of her love, my boy?

Viola I am all the daughters of my father's house,
And all the brothers too; and yet I know not.
Sir, shall I to this lady? (TN2.4.118)

Telling the story of a lost counterpart, Viola's thoughts incline to her brother, bringing to bear all the tragic solitude of that loss - and she closes the circle. She knows neither past/present nor future, and engages Orsino, and the audience, with this. What Viola "~~k~~nows", and cannot disclose, is not love, but her self.

What is the effect, in a play like *Twelfth Night*, of the audience's sympathy? Theatrical texts suggest that sympathy (often at the heart of ideal love) played a significant role in the theatre. But the sympathy that moved audiences was not evoked simply through character role, plot, and situation; the *player*, as much as the play, was to elicit passions directly from the audience, generating or communicating these in performance - rather than playing a part to which a certain emotional response is appropriate. Julia and, especially, Viola complicate this model, evoking sympathy by playing on their parts, in a special relationship with the audience. This returns us to the film's suppression of actors and to our original problem. How does the actor playing a lover appeal for, or generate, sympathy better than the lover? *Shakespeare in Love*'s managing of stage effect could be read in the light of Viola's evocative "I am not that I play." (1.5.164) Will and Viola do not play lovers, for they are lovers. In this, they both are and are not that which they play. A level of pathos is automatically added to their performances. But when *Shakespeare in Love* references Viola's fraught intimacy with Orsino in *Twelfth Night*, in a moonlit meeting with Will, it strips the role of all erotic power; Viola's pass at Will is made broadly comic. On film, biological gender is (made) visually obvious. The film goes further in working to neutralise any possible gender ambiguities, culminating with Will and Viola performing in appropriately gendered roles. As the film (which depends heavily on visual seduction) gives it to its audience, Will and Viola are essentially, in every shot, what you see: Will and Viola. The audience's response is safe and guided.

5. Woeful contagion

Lacking Viola's erotic facility (or the filmic tricks of *Shakespeare in Love*), Julia woos the audience with a description of performance. This is a moment of beautiful harmony and sympathy, but simultaneously of painful schism, of rupture from the self. Julia's is a narrative not of heroic retention, but abandonment. So Sebastian's 'Julia' does not waste, palely, but throws away her sun-expelling mask, exposing herself to weathering elements. The image is less striking, more conventional, than Viola's "patience on a monument" though Julia's ability to point to his/her own "black" skin - separating actor's body and actor's performance in a way that presents at once actor's triumph and defeat - contains potential for pathos. The most remarkable part follows with Julia's (true) fiction of a boy playing, in Julia's clothes, the appropriate part of a lamenting Ariadne.

Silvia How tall was she?

Julia About my stature; for at Pentecost,
When all our pageants of delight were played,
Our youth got me to play the woman's part,
...

And at that time I made her weep agoood,
For I did play a lamentable part.
Madam, 'twas Ariadne, passioning
For Theseus' perjury and unjust flight;
Which I so lively acted with my tears
That my poor mistress, movèd therewithal,
Wept bitterly; and would I might be dead
If I in thought felt not her very sorrow.

Silvia She is beholden to thee, gentle youth.

Alas, poor lady, desolate and left.

I weep myself to think upon thy words. (TGV 4.4.149-52, 157-167)

Sebastian/Julia has introduced 'Julia' telling how 'he' has repeatedly wept for 'her'. He then tells a tale in which 'Julia' is moved to tears by his sympathetic performance of the part of a woman betrayed (a part which will later be hers). Now Silvia weeps. Envisioning Julia's *sympathetic* weeping (at Sebastian's sympathetic performance), she is moved to tears. Sebastian's described

performance is embodied (with the same results), and Silvia becomes one with Julia. Beyond the layers of Julia/Sebastian's own performance and the dizzying gender ambiguities provoked, a spectacular receding mirroring takes place. Sebastian/Julia turns the mirror from 'Sebastian's' weeping on Julia's woes to a picture of Julia weeping at the boy's performance of a story that will mirror her own, and which Sebastian/Julia then feels, doubly, as his/her own. Silvia cannot but join Julia and Sebastian in weeping.

This picture suggests more than (female) sympathy. It epitomises the notion of a common *contagion* engendered in love and in the theatre, one that affects neither eyes nor mind, exclusively, but the whole person - and one which may be deeply affecting.

In some ways, Julia's highly affective meeting with Silvia shows the reverse of the first player's famous performance of Hecuba in *Hamlet*. Like so many theatrical presentations within Shakespeare's plays, that performance is sabotaged by a generally unsympathetic (diegetic) audience, so that even reference made to the player's effectiveness serves to detract from the presentation. The staging of affect culminates when Polonius, noting the physical marks of passion in the performing player (a changed complexion and tears in his eyes),¹⁴³ bids him stop. His observations, cueing the audience to note the player's tears, directly follow lines from the player that insist on the ubiquitous power of passion to move:

The instant burst of clamour that she made—
Unless things mortal move them not at all—
Would have made milch the burning eyes of heaven,
And passion in the gods. (Ham 2.2.495-8)

But neither Polonius nor Hamlet cries; it is only the player, reflecting on Hecuba's passion, that weeps.

The scene in *Two Gentlemen* is so masterfully set up, it can achieve its effect without stage tears; in fact, the generally weak and weepy Sebastian does not shed "woman's tears", except in his/her fictitious account. But the scene demonstrates, and amplifies, the affective power of tears. In

¹⁴³ "Look whe'er he has not changed his colour, and has / tears in's eyes..." (Ham2.2.499-500)

contrast, a crude staging within *The Taming of the Shrew* wryly pulls back the curtain from one of the cheaper tricks used to stage affect, demonstrating a physical, mechanical attitude to tears.

And if the boy have not a woman's gift
To rain a shower of commanded tears,
An onion will do well for such a shift,
Which, in a napkin being close conveyed,
Shall in despite enforce a watery eye. (Shr Induction 120-4)

To deceive with the body, we use a suitably physical trick. But the onion trick is used to show tears to the audience, not to invoke them from an audience. Exposing the (onion) device does not solve the enduring mystery of tears, real or feigned. Lafeu's last deflationary comment in *All's Well that Ends Well*, "[m]ine eyes smell onions, I shall weep anon" (AWEW 5.3.322) points to his artificiality and theatricality, as character and actor (if any such distinction is appropriate). But in *Anthony and Cleopatra*, Enobarbus who, early in the play, banishes womanish tears to the recesses of an onion (Ant 1.3.154)¹⁴⁴, later finds himself "onion-eyed" (4.2.35), as he witnesses Anthony moving his followers to tears.

The ability to physically dissimulate (the actor's particular speciality)¹⁴⁵ was a matter of some fascination for the Renaissance audience, never more than when the dissimulation moves both actors on stage and audience to an emotional response. Stirring, as well as providing convincing proof of, passion (as we have seen in 'A Lover's Complaint'), the act of weeping provides a particularly good example. The lover's feigned tears and sighs (false, or simply overenthusiastic) may be one thing; but they are quite another in a period when the idea that a sigh costs a drop of blood, and thus a unit of vitality, enjoys popular currency, a world where melancholia is the poet lover's appropriately affected pose, but also a potentially life-threatening illness.¹⁴⁶ The sighing

¹³⁴ This grief is crowned with consolation... indeed the tears live in an onion that should water this sorrow. (Ant1.3.152, 154)

¹⁴⁵ in comparison both with non-actors and with orators, whose notion of "actio" (physical delivery) relies less on the physical attitudes that set actors apart.

¹⁴⁶ Bamforth's comment is interesting. "All in all there was no doubt that the melancholic complexion was a dangerous condition which only too easily assumed the nature of a very serious illness. It is therefore surprising to find that it was regarded as in some ways a desirable state, which certain men would take pains to simulate..." (*Little World*, 103) He goes on to contextualise this phenomenon, by sketching the emergence of the more modern denotation of 'humour', and the term's degeneration away from gentlemanliness and 'heroic melancholy'; but he does not place the phenomenon of fashionable melancholy in the context of any discussion of the rather singular condition in which this humour was considered a sophisticated affect – love.

lover may expose his person, his life, to real physical danger, as love draws from him vital sighs and tears; or he may don tears and sighs, gaily clothing his healthy body in the appropriate outward affects of lover's grief. These two early modern pictures of the sighing lover evince contrary, if not irreconcilable, underlying assumptions about the essential nature of the signs of passion and their control. Confronted with their incommensurable logics, it is hard to tell how exactly we (or anyone) should take the strange intersection of medical and popular speculation in the early modern period - to know how to deal with the improbable, quantitative literalness of the first example, or the poetic use of 'melancholy' in the second.¹⁴⁷ What does seem clear is that the mechanical treatment of physical affective signs seen in the onion trick highlights, rather than obviates, the key role of the passions in inducing signs (and sources) of passion.

The chain of sorrowful contagion spectacularly demonstrated by Julia, shares an underlying logic with the generation of the melancholic passion, love, as well as with the evoking of passions by orators and actors. Love may be thought of as an infection, an infection that weakens both body and mind, or leads even to madness. Love may also be itself imagined as a body vulnerable to infection, the infection that seems to menace the lover at the climax of *Astrophil and Stella*, XIV with the fear that his love has been contaminated and has lost its goodness. This spectre of tainted (or tainting) love had its place on Shakespeare's stage. But on the stage there existed the potential for a far less necessarily negative sense of contagion, where contagion, or infection, describes the way love enters and extends from lovers, where love's infection threatens to increase, not decrease, love - to spread love.

Shakespeare in Love clears the stage for its lovers. But love's infection might be a playful possibility on a busy stage. And as, on stage, contagion may enjoy a more positive meaning in relation to human passions, so imitation (the bane of poetry) may also be conceived in a manner less inherently threatening to love. I now turn to explore love's infection and especially this positive sense of contagion as it relates to issues of imitation, reproduction and affect in the plays.

¹⁴⁷ Of course, as Roach shows, even in playing a part, one was taking risks with one's health.

CHAPTER THREE: LOVE'S CONTAGION¹⁴⁸

Navarre is infected

- Love's Labours Lost

1. Love infected

Boyet If my observation, which very seldom lies,
By the heart's still rhetoric disclosed with eyes,
Deceive me not now, Navarre is infected.

Princess With what?

Boyet With that which we lovers entitle "affected". (LLL2.1.226-230)

"Love" in Shakespeare is by turns sickness, infection, plague, a fever, a 'qualm', a quotidian: the daily fever.¹⁴⁹ Boyet's quibble expresses elegantly, if with shaggy-dog delivery, a commonplace almost too common to repeat: love as sickness.¹⁵⁰ Boyet declares Navarre's *infection*: an occasional malapropism,¹⁵¹ here an apt substitution, for "affection".

It is not only the unaffected external observer that may note the lover's sickness. With varying levels of literalness and self-consciousness, Shakespeare's lovers generally diagnose and complain of their love-sickness.¹⁵² Frequently, the lover imagines himself sick so that he may beg a cure.

¹⁴⁸ In *The Emperor of Men's Minds: Literature and the Renaissance Discourse of Rhetoric* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995) Wayne Rebhorn also discusses the generation of passions to more others under the term "contagion" (Miller, *Passion Signified*. 412) His book was unavailable during the writing of this dissertation.

¹⁴⁹ Interested primarily in the quasi-physical dangers of seventeenth century acting, Roach draws attention to the "unsettling resemblance" between inspiration and disease in the medical imagination of the period. Though the mechanisms fostering this connection will be germane to my discussion, my focus is quite different.

¹⁵⁰ "The literary portrayal of love as sickness is traditionally traced back to the seventh-century BC Greek Lyric." By Catallus, the metaphor is already seems "too obvious for words" (Booth, Joan. 'All in the mind: sickness in Catallus 76' in *The Passions in Roman Thought and Literature*. Eds. Braund, Susanna Morton and Christopher Gill (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997) 151-68

¹⁵¹ See Gobbo's malapropism: "He hath a great infection, sir, as one/ would say, to serve" (MV2.2.111-2) and Mistress Quickly's: "Her husband has a / marvellous infection to the little page..." (MWW2.2.104-5)

¹⁵² Thus in *Richard III*, the Petrarchan doctrines of eyes, infection and blame converge in Richard of Gloucester's quick counter to Anne's disgusted rejection:

The classic Petrarchan paradox refines the trope of “love-sickness” (the symptology of love) to position the beloved as source both of love and (possible) cure. This ties love-sickness to the logic of blame, and thus also partially justifies the discomfiting spectre of enfeebling love; in this way, it is not the lovers’ own love that enfeebles, but the *beloved*, holding (from the lover) the power for cure. In “sick health” (Rom1.1.177) then, love and health are made uniquely available to the Petrarchan lover and his argument.

The instances of love we have been reading suggest also something beyond this rather contained system, involving lover and beloved exclusively. Shakespeare’s drama presents love also as infectious, emphasising the spontaneous, *contagious* quality of love. Love is conceived as a pervasive force, an airborne plague that travels with its own unknown motions, through and between bodies.

In *Love’s Labours Lost*, the visiting gentlewomen do not enter Navarre - and do not need to. Any contact¹⁵³ with the Princess and her ladies has, at least in the eyes of Navarre, the power to corrupt and weaken their persons. This is ironic, since it is the inner circle of the court of Navarre who (complaining of infection) will attempt to infect the visiting party with their verses and demonstrations. “Navarre is infected.” Though it is articulated here by Boyet, in attendance on the Princess, Navarre’s perceived infection seems to endorse, or illustrate, Phyllis Rackin’s reading of the period’s gendered metaphors of conquest and contamination, where contamination (rather than conquest) describes specifically female threats to male identity.¹⁵⁴ And when Biron finally explains for the men what was left unsaid in that first meeting, he does so in almost a straight paraphrase of Boyet, reiterating the emphasis on infection:¹⁵⁵

They are infected, in their hearts it lies.

They have the plague, and caught it of your eyes. (5.2.420-1)

Anne Out of my sight! Thou dost infect mine eyes.

Richard Gloucester Thine eyes, sweet lady, have infected mine. (1.2.148-9)

In similar form, Helena responds to the distaste that replaces Demetrius’s appetite:

Demetrius Tempt not too much the hatred of my spirit;

For I am sick when I do look on thee.

Helena And I am sick when I look not on you. (MND2.1.211-3)

¹⁵³ Contact etc. Contact, contingent, contagion share latin root *contingere* – to have contact with, pollute, befall (OED.)

¹⁵⁴ Rackin, ‘Foreign Country’ esp. 75

¹⁵⁵ as well as the role of eyes

This spread of affection is symptom, not source, of Navarre's real problem, one manifested both in their enthusiastic embracing of love's service and in their fervent renunciation: affectation. With "affected," Boyet points also to more aesthetic criteria, preparing the stage for the painful posturing and versifying that will ensue, a new guise for Navarre's academic affectation. Touchstone again offers an apposite judgement on the feigning lover, in his wry comment to Rosalind, whom he finds eagerly perusing Orlando's poetical labours: "This is the very false gallop of verses. Why do you infect your-self with them?" (AYLI 3.2.112-3) Touchstone may in some way point to lovers' "truth"; but if so, it is obliquely. Seeming to relish his Holofernian role in judging the poems' merit, he concerns himself with their aesthetic quality: a value distinct from, though not necessarily unrelated to, their psychological truth. The verses with which Rosalind is seen "infecting" herself, are "infected": that is artificial, affected, such that a discerning reader may be in no way moved or "affected" by them, at least as the rhetoricians describe their art. Yet love-struck Rosalind may still infect herself, stirring her passion with contemplation of these love tokens, addressed (in every line) to Rosalind. Orlando is a better speechifier than versifier yet, as we have seen in Ganymede's refusal to see the "marks of love" in him, his presenting lover's body is as inadequate (to Ganymede) as his scattered body of conventional love poetry. Embarrassingly, Orlando's proliferating love tokens "infect" the whole forest - without much affect. These tokens have their power only as tokens, as Rosalind stands (already) "affected".

Like Navarre, (as Boyet cues our reading of him) Rosalind's lover shows love at first sight with his dumbness: his tongue is tied while his eyes are stretched beyond their capacity. Orlando demonstrates the textbook dumbstruck attitude of the lover before his lady for the first time; given a chance to speak, with the departure of his lady, he offers up a rapturous cry of "Heavenly Rosalind!" By comparison, Rosalind's account of her affection to Celia, following some time after Orlando's departure (and his superficially contrasting - yet entirely expected - response), is comparatively undemonstrative. But reserved as her confession of love is, Rosalind's love may still be reasonably believed (given Orlando's rather frozen and ineloquent impact) to be a case of that convenient theatrical fix-all, and natural companion of love's infection: love at first sight. In *Twelfth Night*, given a far longer first audience with the object of her affection, and no company to interpret her signs, Olivia's slightly more idiosyncratic and feeling experience evokes the physical experience of falling in love, with the metaphor of love as 'plague'.

On the stage, love - ideally visible in the lovers' person - is associated with plague and infection for its invisible *movement*, seen only when it has already struck, its movement stopped. In this, it is akin to the Renaissance notion of disease as Jonathan Sawday describes it: travelling freely, and by its own laws; hidden, but leaving a token of its presence.¹⁵⁶ After her meeting with Cesario, Olivia wonders aloud at her internal change, which is at once striking and imperceptible:

... How now?

Even so quickly may one catch the plague?

Methinks I feel this youth's perfections

With an invisible and subtle stealth

To creep in at mine eyes. Well, let it be. (TN 1.5.264-268)

"Invisible" here must indicate, not 'unseen' - a strange picture indeed - but 'unforeseen'.¹⁵⁷ Yet there remains a rather glaring incongruity in the open, blind, corrupted eye: an eye that cannot see its own penetration, yet can somehow sense it; this is a sense the audience may share. Cesario's lovely person is not physically before Olivia as she speaks these lines. This gives their staging a greater emphasis on character (as Cesario is recalled to mind), as well as achieving the basic stage work of setting up the chase to come, when Olivia calls after him via her Steward. Half a dozen lines stand between Cesario's exit and Olivia's charge to Malvolio to run after the messenger.¹⁵⁸ What we see is Olivia playing (back) Cesario and herself, to recall her infection", at the same time, conjuring up a lovingly itemised image of the speaker.¹⁵⁹

"Above my fortunes, yet my state is well.

I am a gentleman." I'll be sworn thou art.

Thy tongue, thy face, thy limbs, actions, and spirit

Do give thee five-fold blazon... (260-261)

Thus Olivia represents Cesario to herself. She feels him infecting what is presumably her *mind's eye*: infecting from her body to her mind, and back (imaginatively) to her body. 'Love' in early modern discourse moves not only between persons - from eyes (or arrows) to other eyes - but also

¹⁵⁶ Sawday, *Body Emblazoned*. 10

¹⁵⁷ Crystal. *Shakespeare's Words*. 244.

¹⁵⁸ These lines rehearse remarks which, for Olivia, are key: her inquiry into Cesario's parentage and his politic reply to her (rather personal) interest.

¹⁵⁹ A rather delightful touch for Olivia, who satirises her own "inventoried" beauty. (1.5.233-7)

within persons, most typically from the eyes to the innermost parts. It is from these innermost parts (most often the heart,¹⁶⁰ as representative sovereign of these “sovereign thrones”¹⁶¹) that love engendered in the eyes may infect the whole body. This may continue until the eye does not reflect but, in the extreme version, shows forth its love (a picture of the heart) on the body’s surface, in the eyes and on the breast.

Importantly, in the period, love shared with ‘disease’ the conception of transmission - both between bodies and between minds, and between bodies and minds (witness Boyet’s quibble on infected and affected). The notion of the power of minds and bodies to affect each other makes possible the peculiar Renaissance theories of rhetorical effect and affect, and of an audience to be infected with passion.

¹⁶⁰ Lacking the heart’s special mimetic quality, the liver is imagined as the general birthplace of all the passions, but not the true *home* of love. Wright describes in *The Passions* how the spirits come from the brain with petitions, knocking on the door of the heart, which: “... immediately bendeth, either to prosecute it or to eshew it; and the better to effect that affection, draweth other humours to help him...” (Wright in Bamorough. *Little World*. 88-9) This is in line with the poetic commonplace that love enters the body through the eyes, but suffuses it through the heart.

¹⁶¹ “liver, braine and heart,/Those soveraigne thrones” (TN1.1.36-7). See also Bamorough, *Little World*. 53, 55)

2. A (love)sick body is a (love)sick mind

We have seen how a body moved to love becomes self-contaminating. Linked to the Renaissance closing off of the body and changing body behaviours and concepts, the fear of contamination played a significant part in the Renaissance sense of self (and other).¹⁶² The significance of this awareness of contamination in what has been called “the Renaissance imagination” is contested; but, whatever the centrality of contagion in the Elizabethan world picture, its connection with Shakespeare’s stage is clear: the Elizabethan theatre was strongly associated with contagion - both physical and metaphysical, and these two were interrelated. In the discourse of the time, plague was often linked to moral disease, and both to the playhouse.¹⁶³ The strength of this more-than-rhetorical connection would seem to have been peculiarly enabled by Renaissance theories of body and mind.

As a disease of the body may sicken the mind, so a disease of the mind may infect the body. The mind may canker the body, an idea given uncommon (physiological) authority, in the Renaissance, by the theory of the humours, and its integration of mental and physical ‘passions’. This vital interchange between mind and body was not limited to individual systems, particularly as early modern theories of the perceptive faculties described human interactions. Moralising antitheatricalist texts of the period frequently suggested how an actor’s body would infect the eyes and ears of the spectators - and end by infecting their minds. In Renaissance love theory, love was imagined to enter (unseen) through the eyes, moving to infect the heart and, from there, the entire body, even (and especially) other eyes, other bodies. The body of the enamoured lover should then be potentially infectious, or at least communicative.¹⁶⁴ *Romeo and Juliet* (and *Shakespeare in love*) will have only two lovers on the stage. On Shakespeare’s stage, particularly in the sociable comedies, love was often presented less as sickness than contagion; in a *Midsummer Night’s Dream*, the potential for love’s infection is seen to be general, the play simply a matter of the crazy path it travels.

¹⁶² Norbert Elias, from whom these ideas derive, views the function of human emotion as the *communication*, rather than ‘expression’, of an inner world. This is a view refined and somewhat amplified in Falk’s idea of the communicative modern body that “conceals as much as it reveals” (Burkitt, Ian. *Bodies of Thought: embodiment, identity and modernity*. London: Sage Thousand Oaks, 1999. 120), a theory germane to our interest in acting and the presentation of an “inward” passion. Elias describes how, with the ‘closing’ of the body in the Renaissance, “[s]uddenly, people become more sensitive to the exchange of bodily fluids, which raises the fear of contamination” (in Burkitt. *Bodies of Thought*. 120)

¹⁶³ See e.g. Anthony Munday’s *Retrait from Plays*: on wives who “have received at those spectacles such filthie infections, as have turned their minds from chast cogitations, and made them of honest women, light huswives.” (in Yachnin, *Culture of Playgoing*. 77)

Privileging the notion of affect as something palpable in movement, perpetually conveyed from person to person, inevitably gives rise to the question: 'where, then, does the affect come from?' a question at once philosophical and physical. We find an excellent illustration of the problem in the person of the deceived lover, who is beautified and ennobled by the true image of a true love, before discovering the beloved's betrayal. At this point that edifying power falls away. He has drunk and 'seen the spider'; had he not, he might have been fortified:

There may be in the cup
A spider steeped, and one may drink, depart,
And yet partake no venom, for his knowledge
Is not infected; but if one present
Th' abhorred ingredient to his eye, make known
How he hath drunk, he cracks his gorge, his sides,
With violent hefts. I have drunk, and seen the spider. (Win 2.1.41-47)

How would the man that plays Leontes "infect" his mind, where there is (doubly)¹⁶⁵ no spider? A commonplace of the theory of acting (that still persists) requires that the body of the actor follow his mind, although this requires a self deception: the actor must deceive/persuade himself, planting an original fiction, briefly infecting his knowledge. Of course, the actor can never be entirely persuaded of the reality of his role, to the extent of usurping the reality of his performance – thankfully, for the performance (which relies on a double awareness).¹⁶⁶ Passions are presumably a similar (and simpler) matter, requiring the actor only to rouse up false emotions¹⁶⁷, not to deceive himself of facts. But the division between passion and reason, thus applied, does not fit with Renaissance accounts, which I have suggested make less of a clear distinction.

A more interesting theory (or refinement of this theory) is enabled by using the division (and union) of mind and body made possible by early modern habits of thought: the idea that the

¹⁶⁴ in Elias' sense

¹⁶⁵ There is no "spider" in the world of *A Winter's Tale*, only in Leontes' wild supposings; but, further, the irrational Leontes is presented by a rational actor.

¹⁶⁶ Like the audience, who will not run onto the stage to interfere with the actor's actions, the actor (however deep in his role) retains at least enough awareness of his role and surroundings to observe his cues, and not wander off the stage and out of the theatre.

¹⁶⁷ Which may come from other ('true') facts in the actor's experience.

actor's passionate *body* deceives his mind. Minds and bodies move minds and bodies – and not necessarily in that order. One might argue that emotion must come from “within”. But, in the Renaissance, the passionating body might move the mind to passion. The physical mechanism by which the audience is deceived is then precisely the same as that by which the actor is deceived. In both cases, it is the body. The one provides a model, a type, for the other.

For all the early modern period's interest in bodily causes and correspondences, and the connection of (at least the signs of) love with real physical ailments¹⁶⁸, the notion of the body's “infection” was essentially metaphoric, and thus entertaining for its sometimes incongruous effects¹⁶⁹. But Shakespeare pushes beyond these effects. “Infected... that which we lovers entitle ‘affected’”. (LLL2.1.228; 230) We have already looked at the ambivalence contained in ‘affect’, which suggests, on the one hand, a positive appetite, passion, or inclination; but, on the other, feigning and imitation. ‘Infected’ is as slippery a word as ‘affected’. Beyond its familiar denotation and connotation, ‘infect’ could be used, at the time, specifically as a *rhetorical* term, to denote the act of *affecting*: influencing, moving.¹⁷⁰ This is perhaps the sense closest to love's “infection” as I consider it on the Shakespearean stage.

Moving, the Renaissance actor is moved, and moves his audience. Indeed literary examples proliferate to suggest that acting the part may lead to genuine passions (or passions disturbingly indistinguishable from the real thing). Emotion may be generated in movement, often through imitation, and does not necessarily seem to originate in the individual, as we might expect. This effectively displaces the idea of deep emotion as proof of selfhood, emotion as an exclusively interior reality - in favour of moving passions, that move – physically - through minds and bodies.

¹⁶⁸ For the former, see Bulwer's *Chironomia* and similar works of the time; for the latter take the example of the theory, earlier discussed, that each sigh costs the lover a drop of blood.

¹⁶⁹ ... Thus Shakespeare has Leontes rage:

Were my wife's liver
Infected as her life, she would not live
The running of one glass. (Win1.2)

This provides a challenge to a common bodily concept to parallel Audrey's demonstration of her impotent eyes that are called murderers. Here the “infected” liver that has no adverse physical effects. Camillo, who presumably takes the King's meaning, still asks Leontes: “[w]ho does *infect* her?” (my italics) Leontes' irony is bested by the irony that it is indeed Hermione's life, not her liver (seat of passions) that is infected.

¹⁷⁰ Crystal, *Shakespeare's Words*, 2002. 238

CONCLUSION: THE ENDS OF PASSION

The players, who are only the imitators of truth, have taken possession of it

Cicero *De Oratore*

1. The common bare passion¹⁷¹:

Shakespeare in Love finds actorly, rhetorical passions inadequate to its theme, the representation of true love. In the film, art is mimetic (in the classic sense of imitating life). Passions are not; they are the art's life, the (emotional) reality it must mimic or embody. Even where the film allows for the playful possibility of life imitating art,¹⁷² some profound original love is mandatory. In the face of this love, the actor becomes inadequate. The film might justify its privileging of 'authentic' emotion through the replacement of actors with lovers by employing a well-known ^{quotation} from Hamlet:

Is it not monstrous that this player here,
But in a fiction, in a dream of passion,
Could force his soul so to his whole conceit
... What would he do
Had he the motive and the cue for passion
That I have?... (Ham2.2.-534-9)

Interestingly, in a play that treats the dilemma of action and inaction, Hamlet's answer stays within the theatre. His meditation on the consequences of his deep passion and passionate knowledge does not at this point lead his mind to the prospect of a violent act of passion; Hamlet rather considers the possibility for theatrical performance that his passionate motives might grant.

¹⁷¹ This section was strongly suggested by Dawson's comments on the personation of Burbage/Talbot. "Whose body is it, we may ask, and how does it excite tears? Such is the age-old question of acting – how can the representing body not only stand in for the actual one but stir up passions in those who are but mutes or audience to its act, passions akin to but even stronger than those conjured up by the "real" Talbot?" (*Culture of Playgoing*. 15-16)

¹⁷² Besides its many references to the plays, the film contains narrative moments where the plot turns to imitate art, such as the hint (discussed earlier) that Will as Romeo might drink poison on stage, leading to a real Romeo and Juliet tragedy. The end of the film sees 'Viola' washed up on a foreign shore. In the uncut version, it is made clear that the 'real' Viola has washed up on a 'real' shore – the Americas.

... He would drown the stage with tears,
 And cleave the general ear with horrid speech,
 Make mad the guilty and appal the free,
 Confound the ignorant, and amaze indeed
 The very faculty of eyes and ears... (Ham2.2.539-43)

In this, his 'Hecuba' speech, Hamlet points passionately to his own frustrated passion. His comment asserts two things: the authenticity of his feeling (against the actor's fictive passion for the fictive Hecuba), and the intensity of these feelings. The first of these is immediately complicated by the theory of passions outlined above and, in the context of theatrical representation, is undermined. The second remains to be considered.

Wright suggests: "... as the internal affection is more vehement, so the external perswasion will be more potent..."¹⁷³ Do (unusually) strong feelings guarantee effective representation of passion - that is, an imitation that successfully prompts the audience's imitative/mimetic response? Certainly they do not for the actor speaker of sonnet 23.¹⁷⁴ A number of Renaissance texts seem to suggest, in keeping with the privileging of restraint (seen in Bacon), that the best actor would not be the most emotional. This is due in part to the way passions were generally conceived of in the period. Vulnerable to violent physical change, the Renaissance body was also susceptible to the passions, "instantly and capriciously capable of passions."¹⁷⁵ Contrary to the cliché of modern theatre that requires its actors to generate or 'find' emotions to supplement the poverty of their emotional performance, in the early modern period, passions were imagined as powerful, spontaneous forces, never far off. These passions required no encouragement. If they were to be cultivated, it was rather in the sense that they be channelled and regulated.¹⁷⁶ Having within so much passion and knowledge that "passeth show" (1.2.85), Hamlet would *not* be an ideal actor - a notion with which Hamlet's personated presence on stage self-consciously plays. The idea that,

¹⁷³ Wright, *Passions of the Minde*. 174

¹⁷⁴ "In mine own love's strength seem to decay
 O'er-charged with burden of my own love's might"

¹⁷⁵ Dawson, *Culture of Playgoing*. 21

¹⁷⁶ "Emotion, passion, transport - these he can take for granted - like mercy, they rain down from heaven... Alumni of modern-day acting classes have a difficult time grasping this essential fact... : the actor/orator of the seventeenth century sought to acquire inhibitions" (Roach, *Player's Passion*. 52) On the imminence of passions see also James, *Passion and Action*.

with his motive and cue for passion, Hamlet's horror overwhelms him, making him incapable of effective action, does not quite encompass this point.

In his Hecuba speech, Hamlet seems to advocate Cicero's desirable "moderation in imitation"¹⁷⁷, a (relative) criterion that can be made to moderate whatever a period or individual finds problematic in representation. Formulated in these terms, 'natural' acting can cover a huge range of styles and approaches. It is unsurprising that critics after Hamlet have taken his Hecuba speech and variously interpreted it (according to their preference) as Shakespeare's definitive vision for theatre, identifying in it an ideal, 'naturally' acted performance aesthetic in line with the ideals of that time.¹⁷⁸

But alongside their marked investment in convincing mimesis, acting manuals (and other more general, descriptive documents) are peppered with what seem rather arbitrary demonstrations of decorum for decorum's sake. Rules are listed for the seemly containment of gesture and voice¹⁷⁹ and Hamlet's admonishment of the actor's 'sawing' hand draws also from these. The passionate actor/orator must, for example, watch the use of his inferior left hand, and must never let either hand rise above the level of his eyes.¹⁸⁰ This Ciceronian injunction is found in, among other lesser sources, Bulwer's *Chironomia, or the Art of Manual Rhetoric*. Here, Bulwer sets down the ideal motions appropriate to each emotion: gestures already supposedly assigned by nature, but available to men only, he suggests, mediated by art. Classifying, by their communicative function, both natural and rhetorical gestures, Bulwer's work pays attention to the relationship between nature and artifice. He describes how nature "while she labours to be free in pouring out her hidden treasures, ... imprints upon the body the active hints of her most generous conceits, darting her rays into the body, as light hath its emanation from the sun; ..." ¹⁸¹ What follows is of particular interest: "... eloquent impressions, a kind of speech most consonant to the mind, are in

¹⁷⁷ Cole and Chinoy, *Actors on Acting*. 23

¹⁷⁸ Donawerth *Shakespeare and Acting Theory* and Cole and Chinoy, *Actors on Acting*. 77

¹⁷⁹ these are derived often from the classics, and seem to foreshadow the insistence on decorous presentation that would follow in the eighteenth century.

¹⁸⁰ Cicero in Cole and Chinoy, *Actors on Acting* 27 see Joseph, *Elizabethan Acting*. 64-5 for Elizabethan injunctions against "the solecism of using the left hand".

¹⁸¹ Note again the use of "imprint" in this description of external forces (of personified nature) penetrating and suffusing the body.

the moving of the hand so neatly wrought and emphatically produced that *the hand seems many times to have conceived the thought*"¹⁸²

In his *Art of Manual Rhetoric*, Bulwer is given, naturally, to exaggeration of the importance of the hand, which would go some way to explaining his rather striking conclusion. But the passage seems to speak for the body, generally, and the appellation that Bulwer includes to describe this phenomenon- "mens corporis, or the mind of the body"¹⁸³ - is then particularly compelling. Again we seem to see the mind following the divine, natural expression of the body.

In *The Arte of English Poesie*, a text that has been closely read for the symptomatic instability of its categories of nature and art¹⁸⁴, Puttenham writes of rhetorical figures - by definition, artificial forms of communication - "all your figures Poeticall or Rhethoricall, are but observations of strange speeches, and such as without any arte at al we should use, and commonly do, even by very nature without discipline."¹⁸⁵ Here Puttenham seems to suggest - however briefly - that rhetorical forms are simply effective amplifications of natural communication: formalised, ideal forms of those features that occur naturally when men speak in passion.¹⁸⁶

I have constructed my reading of love in Shakespeare's plays around the notion articulated by Thomas Wright that "the actions of the bodie should be, in a perfit perswader, an image of the passion in the mind."¹⁸⁷ Wright directly follows this statement with a consideration of the practical question of how this may be achieved - or, as he puts it: "how may this be performed?"¹⁸⁸ He recommends firstly that we "...[l]ooke upon other men appassionat, how they demeane themselves in passions, and observe what and how they speake ... what motions are stirring in the eyes, hands, bodie."¹⁸⁹ To learn - with an eye to emulate - the natural movements of passion, the orator is directed to look to impassioned men (we assume, genuinely moved) for

¹⁸² Bulwer, John. *Chirologia: Or the Natural Language of the Hand and Chironomia: or the Art of Manual Rhetoric*. (1644) Ed. James W Cleary (Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1974) 170 (my emphasis)

¹⁸³ Bulwer, *Chironomia*. 170

¹⁸⁴ Attridge, Derek. 'Puttenham's Perplexity: Nature, Art, and the Supplement in Renaissance Poetic Theory' in *Literary Theory / Renaissance Texts*. Eds. Parker, Patricia and David Quint (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1986) 257-279

¹⁸⁵ quoted in Attridge, *Puttenham's Perplexity*. 267

¹⁸⁶ Miller makes the same point (*Passions Signified*. 411-2) See also Wilson, *The Arte of Rhetorique*. for an explanation of rhetoric "gathered upon eloquence"

¹⁸⁷ Wright, *Passions of the Minde*. 197

¹⁸⁸ Wright, *Passions of the Minde*. 179

¹⁸⁹ Wright, *Passions of the Minde*. 179

the gestures that make a convincing impassioned oratory. For by mimicking these passionate men, the orator will unlock his own powers of passion to make men passionate. This idea sits somewhat awkwardly with clear-cut modern ideas of authenticity, originality and mimesis, but it would be by no means inconceivable for the Renaissance reader.

More bizarre is what follows: to learn the natural movements that one must emulate, the orator is counselled to watch the movements of impassioned men, but above all, the movements of *actors*, “who act excellently; for as the perfection of their exercise consisteth in imitation of others, so they that imitate best, act best.”¹⁹⁰ ... In the substance of external action for the most part orators and stage players agree: and only they differ in this, that these act feignedly, those really”.¹⁹¹

Wright’s ambiguous defense of stage players is echoed in the description of ‘An Excellent Actor’ (1615), where the writer extends the individual into the ‘theatrum mundi’: “... all men have been of his [the actor’s] occupation: and indeed, what he doth feignedly that do others essentially: this day one plays a monarch, the next a private person...”¹⁹² It is Wright’s only compliment for “stage plaiers” - concerned as he is with restoring and promoting the noble art of rhetoric - and a significant one.

In Bulwer, we then see, not the work of a pedantic and petty cataloguer, but the real belief that natural gestures need to be purified by art, precisely in order not to occlude their inherent eloquent illumination. Plutarch wrote in his *Symposiacs* “... he that is really affected with grief or anger presents us with nothing but the common bare passion...”¹⁹³ Renaissance thinkers would seem to bear this out, even as they accord the passions a privileged place. Early modern texts suggest it was not the strength of the passion that enabled the actor to feelingly personate, but rather an acute attention to the forms of the passion - the feelings would follow.

¹⁹⁰ Wright, *Passions of the Minde*. 179

¹⁹¹ Wright, *Passions of the Minde*. 179

¹⁹² attrib. Webster in Cole and Chinoy. *Actors on Acting*. 89

¹⁹³ Cole and Chinoy, *Actors on Acting*. 13

2. Ends of Passion

Mastering and manipulating passion was not the only goal for theatre in the Renaissance, nor was it necessarily the highest - certainly not for everybody. Various rhetorical-theatrical models can, and have, been identified in development and competition on Shakespeare's stage, as seen in Jane Donawerth's essay on Shakespeare and the acting theory of his times. She traces - in Shakespeare's works, and in his general milieu, linking the two - three distinct stages in stage theory, distinguished in each case by their prime emphasis. These stressed, successively: evocation of passion; internalised/psychologised presentation of character; and decorous, ideal movement. Donawerth begins this essay:

Throughout Shakespeare's plays, characters describe their own or other's acting... Yet these speakers attribute to acting different characteristics: Julia stresses the portraying and moving of emotions, Feste, the characterising of Malvolio by means of voice, and Prospero, Ariel's ideal movement.¹⁹⁴

Donawerth's intention, as she then makes clear, is to show the development of Shakespeare's conception of acting in correspondence with the trends of the time¹⁹⁵ – her three representative emphases. But Donawerth is aware these three (and more) features of theatrical effect, did more than overlap. Throughout the period, these (and others) coexisted; all enjoyed, and competed for, importance. I have not attempted to corroborate or refute Donawerth's model of linear development: an ambitious project in her short paper, and one still too large for this dissertation. Noting simply an appreciably strong tradition of the passions in early modern theatre, and its wider applications in the "Renaissance imagination", especially as regards the affecting of emotion in Renaissance theories of love, I have pursued particularly what Donawerth identifies as Julia's/Shakespeare's emphasis on the passions. But, having investigated the passionate, rhetorical Elizabethan actor, it seems to me that we can isolate neither decorum, nor character identification (nor, for that matter, passionate, rhetorical delivery) without missing the full effect of rhetorical thinking and the theory of the passions in the early modern theatre.

¹⁹⁴ Donawerth, *Shakespeare and Acting Theory*. 165

¹⁹⁵ Donawerth, *Shakespeare and Acting Theory*. 165 Donawerth's phrasing is a little less ambitious: "to show that Shakespeare's conception of acting changed in correspondence with acting theory in the English Renaissance"

Extending the Renaissance theory of (mimetic) affect to an understanding of the passions might provide an effective alternative to Donawerth's second category, negating the need for - or the relevance of - identification. In her progression of stages, driven, it seems, by succeeding moral defences of the stage, Donawerth acknowledges the continuity between a rhetorical passionate emphasis and (her second category) an emphasis on internal, psychologically motivated characterisation¹⁹⁶. But it must be stressed just how different, and how powerful, the rhetorical model of the passions could be, where - as I have suggested - moving, movable passions were distinct from inner, defining emotions and thoughts.¹⁹⁷ Where a rhetorical, passionate model is at work, the audience need not identify with a lover in order to be moved in his humour. Similarly, the Renaissance actor need not and (as Roach's humoral account suggests) would not, need to draw on his own internal passion to 'identify' with, and substitute for, that of a passionating character.

As I have shown, while it was essential for the actor to be moved, it was not so much the strength of the passion, but rather an acute attention to the *forms* of the passion, that would enable Shakespeare's actors to effectively personate. This returns us to decorum"¹⁹⁸, the third phase in a shift of focus in the early modern theatre that Donawerth accordingly isolates as distinctive in its period. But the picture obtained from my investigation of the "rhetorical," "passionate" style - which examined rhetoric and passions, as well as the common thinking supporting them in the period - suggests, not the distinctiveness of decorum in early modern theatrical thought but rather decorum's strong links with the theory of passionate and rhetorical affect.

The issue of decorum returns us to the refinements of the stage and the 'Hecuba' problem: how could an actor be considered to show emotion better than a man genuinely moved? When Wright advises the persuasive speaker to look to men "appassionate", but especially to actors, he is thinking of the ideal speaker's ideally decorous, persuasive movements and gestures - the language of the body (and that aspect of performance which sets the actor apart). If the

¹⁹⁶ "... the old idea was still there, but overlaid with a new one closer to our idea of characterisation" (Donawerth, *Shakespeare and Acting Theory* 169)

¹⁹⁷ Dawson and Yachnin's remarkable collaborative debate explores the tensions between individuation and engagement, inward consciousness and passions - this, of course, in the words of Dawson (*Culture of Playgoing*. 105), with whom I am inclined to side.

¹⁹⁸ Other descriptions were : "decency, discretion, seemliness, comeliness, agreeableness, seasonableness, welltemperedness, aptness, fittingness, good grace, conformity, proportion and conveniency." (Attridge, *Puttenham's Perplexity*. 265-6) Attridge "arbitrarily" favours "decorum", also the term that Maker treats, and I follow him - but his full list of early modern options gives an important sense of the inadequacy of the terms we use, particularly where scholarly use has made them (deceptively) familiar.

actor/orator is the preferred model for moving passion, this is presumably because the actor's careful, precise gestures refine passionate gestures to better show the emotion.. If the early modern body was imagined to be capable of a great degree of transparency and direct, passionate communication, this is not to say that the body's artless expression was imagined as generally perfect. "No, that which is most natural is that which nature permits to be done to the greatest perfection."¹⁹⁹ Such was Quintilian's word on the matter, and one which continued to enjoy currency in the Renaissance, especially in the rhetorical logic of 'illuminato'. The body is not 'natural' where it permits *more* than nature. The honest gestures of the man on the street are imperfect, not because they are too expressive of emotion - too 'natural', we might say - but because, in their excesses, they are imagined to *obscure* the inward truth, the truth of nature, an occlusion which the illumination and amplification of rhetoric in fact attempts to remove. Rhetorical handbooks, codifying speech in rhetorical figures, and descriptive works like Bulwer's *Chironomia*, documenting the appropriate "natural" gestures of the body, all worked to reveal (or simulate) a natural perfection of expression.

In her discussion of 'Nature and Decorum in the Theory of Elizabethan Acting', Lise Lone Marker connects the emphasis on forms and decorum in the period to the phenomenon that we began by considering: "the [Renaissance] belief in a demonstrable link between inner thought or emotion and its ideal outward manifestation"²⁰⁰ Marker points us to "the pattern of approach that presupposed the possibility of an ideal Sorrow or Fear, the existence of an ideal lover,..."²⁰¹ for in the Renaissance, following the classical theory of ideal forms... "'truth to life' did not mean naturalism, but fidelity to ideal or universal truth."²⁰² What did this mean, practically? Following the classical imitation of absolutes, the actor was to pay attention, not to the individual feelings and thoughts that made up character (identification again), but to the "single, sustained 'affection', or overall emotional impression."²⁰³ This would not negate individual characterisation in general, but if Shakespeare's actors wished to elicit a passionate response, they would most likely look to the overall impression: an ideal passion, to be elicited with a

¹⁹⁹ Quintilian (ix.iv.5) in Tuve, *Elizabethan Imagery*. 37

²⁰⁰ Marker, Lise-Lone. 'Nature and Decorum in the Theory of Acting' in *The Elizabethan Theatre II: Papers given at the second international conference on Elizabethan Theatre...* 1969 London: Macmillan, 1970. p.106 my italics. This emphasis refines Marker's earlier reference to the Renaissance belief that a "demonstrable link existed between inner emotion and its expression in a outward form." (92). We may note also the interest that this question has had for later critics such as Maus (*Inwardness*).

²⁰¹ Marker, 'Nature and Decorum'. 96

²⁰² Marker, 'Nature and Decorum'. 91 Renaissance acting, Marker shows us, would not be explicable in the terms of 'naturalism' or 'formalism'; their vocabularies are inadequate to understanding the representative practices of a very different time.

decorously ideal bodily presentation. As I have shown, this ideal bodily presentation could function to elicit the passion in the audience, but also to elicit it in the performing actor.

This is not entirely surprising when we consider Quintilian's definition of the natural as "that which nature permits to be done to the greatest perfection" and Bulwer's fanciful description of ideal(ising) Nature, who: "while she labours to be free in pouring out her hidden treasures, ... imprints upon the body the active hints of her most generous conceits, darting her rays into the body, as light hath its emanation from the sun; ..." ²⁰⁴ For Bulwer, the hand's eloquence seems to precede the mind, and indeed Nature impresses her ideal perfection from without, not from within.

Might this be applied to affect itself? The formulaic, decorous acting style does not deny the realities of the passions, but (tellingly) reflects early modern attitudes to the passions. I have argued that, in the Renaissance, passion did not correspond to an individual interiority: the inward, defining properties/possessions of individuals. In the theatre, as in life, passions were imagined as vital, dynamic forces – communicable, and *common*: both pervasive and shared.

In *Action in Eloquence*, a book treating the Shakespearean language of gesture, David Bevington's conclusion on passionate gesture suggests something like (the physical equivalent of) Marker's "sustained, overall emotional impression":

Shakespeare's characters do find something invariably normative in the gestural language of emotion. The meaning of gesture is in the final analysis a function of role; the gesture must be appropriate and typical because the emotion itself is typical. In love, one acts out the experience of lovers everywhere... [accepting] one's *participation* in the natural and social order ²⁰⁵

The typical gesture of typical emotion is a function of role. Bevington's reference to "participation" can perhaps be extended, and fitted even more neatly to the actor (and lover), with Dawson's use of the word with its sixteenth century religious/spiritual connotation, where

²⁰³ Marker 'Nature and Decorum'. 92

²⁰⁴ Bulwer, *Chironomia*. 170

²⁰⁵ Bevington, David. *Action in Eloquence: Shakespeare's language of gesture* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1984) 98

'participation' conveys the complex intensity of the bodily representation in the theatre.²⁰⁶ The individual lover, particularly, participates in love, as a specific body - or rather, embodiment. This lover then has something already in common with the embodying actor, in his ambivalent relationship to role - the specific and the ideal.

Renaissance love exists to some extent intrinsically in tension with Donawerth's psychologised individualism that involves the actor's creative "identification" with his role. Admittedly, the lover recognises, and argues passionately for, the crucial individuality of the beloved, and of the lover's own love and desires. But this Renaissance lover is a conventional type – a commonplace that seems to have caused Renaissance playwrights relatively little discomfort. The ideal actor would then, acting love, act the 'ideal' lover. The connection is intensified by a rhetorical-humoral theory in which the audience's passion can be *directly* elicited in imitation, and in which the ideal lover is thus an actor/rhetor.

Where passions are communicable and shared, the passionating actor participates in ideal forms beyond realistic imitation or a personal, interior emotional experience. The real, ideal love of *Shakespeare in Love* is entirely unnecessary for this process. In order to move his audience, what the actor represents (with his purified performance) is a purified, or ideal, emotion. 'Ideal' here does not correspond to false – or to true. Nature and art may be opposed but, as Touchstone rightly notes in the case of lover's 'feigning', and Bulwer validates, the ideal of nature and the ideal of art may be considered one and the same. The ideal is nature's truth and "true" emotion may be generated in performance. Thus the actor is an early modern exemplar for the performative, rhetorical nature - the art - of love.

²⁰⁶ Dawson, *Culture of Playgoing*. 'Chapter One', esp. 11-14

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